Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 297 | THURSDAY OCTOBER 23, 2008 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

12 DAYS TO GO BEFORE ELECTION DAY

OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you plan to wear an orange shirt anytime this week?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

23 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

Abuse?
AP says Gov. Palin charged the state for her children to travel with her, including to events where they were not invited.

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Britney Spears has a license to go free.

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Cing urged to restart his campaign for delegate post. **PAGE 2**
Torres backs Fitial lawsuit vs federalization. **PAGE 6**

Fitch places airport bonds on 'rating watch negative'

…and downgrades CPA seaport bond

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

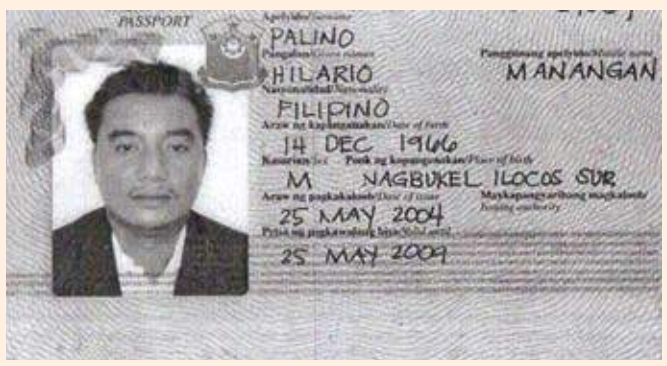
Fitch Ratings, an international agency that evaluates bond ratings, has placed the Commonwealth Ports Authority's $16.5 million airport revenue bonds on Rating Watch Negative, indicating "a real possibility" that CPA may default on its bond obligations. At the same time, it downgraded CPA's $34.3 million seaport revenue bonds, calling it a "significant credit risk."

> *Without a significant increase in revenue, CPA's cash could be depleted in two to three years.*

See FITCH on Page 4

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

In this file photo, tourists wait for their flights inside the Saipan International Airport.



The data page of Hilario M. Palino's passport.

Body of drowning victim found

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety's Search and Rescue Unit recovered yesterday morning the body of a man who drowned while fishing along the cliff lines of Marine Beach in Kagman.

DPS spokesperson Lei Ogumoro said that rescuers recovered the body of Hilario M. Palino along the shoreline near the northern side of Marine Beach yesterday at 8:51am.

Ogumoro said Palino was transported to the Commonwealth Health Center where a doctor pronounced him dead at 10:26am.

Palino, 42, a Filipino stevedore, was swept out to sea

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'House likely to scrap Senate-passed budget'

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Palacios

The House of Representatives looks set to snub the Senate-passed version of the budget because of the cost-cutting measures included in the bill.

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White House also eyeing Pacific war monument

> *The memory, that collective memory of the war is being lost today. We need to keep that memory alive. It's too important to lose to time.*

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

With all the firestorm surrounding the White House's bid to preserve the natural resources in the ocean waters around the CNMI's northern islands, a separate Bush administration plan for the waters of the Pacific has gone overlooked, one that would designate a host of key historical sites linked to World War II as a national monument.

On Wednesday, White House

See WHITE on Page 4

Local

Cing urged to restart his campaign for delegate

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The Senate has urged former senator David Cing to rejoin the congressional race and not to wait for lawmakers to clear his brother of alleged impropriety and nepotism.

The Senate Committee on Resources, Economic Development and Programs yesterday postponed a public hearing, where the Department of Public Lands was supposed to answer questions on public land issues, including allegations against Cing's brother, Raynaldo.

Cing had suspended his campaign after the Taotao Tano citizen group claimed Raynaldo was granted a large piece of homestead land because he is the brother-in-law of DPL Secretary John S. DelRosario.

Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider informed Cing in a letter yesterday that the public hearing has been rescheduled for Thursday, Nov. 13, which comes a week after the congressional delegate election.

"As such, it would seem unwise for you to hinge your political endeavors on any action from the Legislature generally or the Senate Standing Committee on Resources, Economic Development and Programs specifically," said Hofschneider, chairman of the committee.

He added that legislative oversight hearings are held to gather information used to craft legislation. "It is usually not the committee's place to conduct trials and determine guilt, innocence or to exonerate any individual," he said. Yet, he said the committee will continue to hold public hearings regarding to DPL and land issues in the CNMI.

"Please know that my committee has taken no position on the propriety of [the former Marianas Public Lands Authority], DPL's or your brother's land deal," Hofschneider told Cing. "Until such time that I have been provided with all the information requested from DPL, the committee remains neutral on this issue. As such, I encourage you to restart your campaign if you feel it is in the best interests of the people of Tinian and the CNMI."

Taotao Tano has alleged that Raynaldo improperly received a 1.5-hectare agricultural homestead lot with Del Rosario's help. Shortly after the accusation, Cing announced he would not conduct any political activities until the Senate completes an investigation.

"It's useless for me to be telling the people of the Commonwealth how I think our problems should be fixed, if I have a problem in my own home. So I am demanding the Senate to get to the bottom of this as soon as possible," said Cing, who is one of the nine candidates running to become the Commonwealth's first ever delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives.

For his part, DelRosario has called Taotao Tano's allegations "moronically baseless." The allotment of the homestead land, DelRosario said, was granted long before he took on the role as DPL's Secretary.

According to the DPL secretary, a memorandum prepared by the former director of the Homestead Division shows that Raynaldo Cing had applied for an agricultural homestead in 1976 when the NMI was still under the old Trust Territory Government. The former MPLA approved Raynaldo Cing's claim shortly before it was abolished in 2006.

In light of this approval, DelRosario said, "[m]y decision was basically ceremonial, honoring the former agency's approved disposition."

FERIDE DELA TORRE

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo administers the oath of office for Department of Public Safety range master Ambrosio T. Ogumoro.

Ogumoro takes oath as DPS range master

Ambrosio T. Ogumoro took his oath of office yesterday as range master for the Department of Public Safety.

"I am very happy that I am back to serve our community and law enforcement in the CNMI," Ogumoro told *Saipan Tribune.*

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo administered the oath for Ogumoro in his courtroom.

As range master, Ogumoro is in charge of the armory and firearms record, and firearms training for all law enforcement agencies in the CNMI.

Ogumoro said there are a lot of priorities he needs to address in the department.

"One is to upgrade the training proficiency and the other is to address the needs of law enforcement itself," he said.

Ogumoro was reinstated to his post as range master on Oct. 6. With the oath-taking he can now proceed with firearms training.

"It [oath taking] gives me the authority to carry firearms and train [police on handling firearms] within the CNMI," he said.

"And so there should be no questions or doubts within the community whether I am deputized or certified to train [people on] firearms," he added.

Ogumoro said he appreciates the administration's trust in him. He also thanked his friends, family members and for some DPS personnel who attended the oath-taking ceremony to support him.

'I am proud to be back," the range master said.

Govendo said he is happy that Ogumoro is back because the range master, who used to serve with the U.S. Marines, has a lot of things to contribute to law enforcers and to the CNMI people.

Juan M. Cabrera, owner of Bing Bing Bang Shooting Range in Garapan, said he owns 36 guns and it was Ogumoro who certified him.

"He gave me more knowledge on how to handle firearms. Mr. Ogumoro tought me a lot and now I am a professional," Cabrera said. "A lot of police officers that time when Ogumoro was not there [DPS shooting range], they didn't know how to shoot a gun." ***(Ferdie dela Torre)***

CAO says no to Bush's marine monument plan

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
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BUSINESS EDITOR

The Carolinian Affairs Office on Monday issued a resolution rejecting the White House's controversial proposal to establish a national marine monument in the waters around the CNMI's northern islands, saying the plan would breach the CNMI's Covenant with the American government.

The resolution, released Tuesday, contends that people of indigenous descent are the rightful owners of the waters at issue and calls on the federal government to "compensate" people of indigenous descent for any natural resources it uses for conservation purposes. Any restrictions the monument would impose, it adds, would mean a unilateral change to the Covenant without the CNMI's consent, a point that proponents of the plan have long disputed.

The resolution comes as a team of officials from the White House Council on Environmental Quality is now on Saipan, meeting with community groups and local government officials in a bid to build cooperation and support on the monument issue. It's intent, according to its text, is to back "Paramount High Chief" Gov. Benigno Fitial's efforts to oppose the creation of the monument.

"The Carolinian Affairs Advisory Committee presents a unitary strong opposition of monument designation," the resolution says, adding later that the CAO's membership would want to see "every national marine proposal for the Mariana Islands (Commonwealth) be rejected in its entirety."

The CAO's resolution comes after a letter it sent to the White House last month, saying that indigenous people in the CNMI have long practiced environmental conservation and the regulations a monument would impose constitute a violation of the Covenant.

"Because the Covenant is a binding bilateral agreement between the U.S. and the people of the NMI, neither party may unilaterally amend the Covenant's fundamentals' [sic] provisions without the consent of the other," the letter says. "To do so would constitute a material breach of the Covenant."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Melvin Faisao, chairman of the CAO Advisory Committee, presents James Connaughton with the Carolinian Affairs resolution and the Saipan Man'Amko Council's resolution opposing the marine monument plan.

Tattoo festival begins today

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Tattoo artists from around the world are converging on Saipan today as the Tatu Fest 2008 gets underway at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

"This is a one-of-a-kind event," said local tattoo master Ed Elenzano a.k.a. Dragon Edong, the organizer of the second annual festival.

He extended the festival from two to four days this year due to demand, he said.

Nearly 30 tattoo artists are expected at the event, including artists from France, Japan, Norway, U.S. mainland, and Malaysia.

Elenzano said the event is a good way for people to learn about the styles of tattooing in different countries and islands.

There will also be competitions each day, Elenzano said. The categories include best portrait, most realistic, best color, best tribal, best black and gray, best Japanese tattoo, best bodysuit, best dragon, sexiest tattoo, best arm tattoo, and best leg tattoo.

The $10 entrance fee allows for a free drink and live entertainment. Children under 10 can get in free with a parent.

The festival is being held at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort & Spa today through Sunday.

The event is sponsored by iConnect, Budweiser, Marianas Visitors Authority, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Aquarius Beach Tower, Salbahe Brand, National Office Supply, Gold's Gym, Island Apparel, Pro-Tech, Islander Rent-A-Car, Godfather's Bar, and El Drako Kooleksions.

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5th Prize: His and Hers Club Elan One (1) Year Membership from Hyatt Regency Saipan.
6th Prize: Round Trip Tickets for Two (2) To Osaka, Japan from Asiana Airlines; Three (3) Night Stay at Hyatt Regency Osaka; Two (2) Therapeutic Aroma Treatments From Tropical Blend Spa.
7th Prize: Round Trip tickets for Two (2) To Cairns, Australia from Continental Airlines; Two (2) Therapeutic Aroma Treatments from Tropical Blend Spa.
8th Prize: Round Trip Ticket for Two (2) To Manila, Philippines from Continental Airlines; Three (3) Night Stay at Hyatt Hotel & Casino Manila; Two (2) Therapeutic Aroma Treatments From Tropical Blend Spa.
9th Prize: 5 pieces Dining Rattan Set From Joeten Ace Hardware.
10th Prize: 4 Day / 3 Night Stay Deluxe Stay At Pacific Islands Club;; Two (2) Therapeutic Aroma Treatments From Tropical Blend Spa.
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Special Hyatt Hotel rate for all Club 200 ticket holders. $100 per night for October 24, 25 and 26th. Ticket holders need to provide their ticket number when making reservations.
Special musical guest Willie K.

WHITE

From Page 1

officials held a brief closed-door conference at American Memorial Park on the plan, which according to one source could include the park and a site in Guam in the designation. The proposal, set forth in a memo from President Bush in May, aims to preserve historical places and artifacts that played a crucial role in America's military campaign in the Pacific, such as those at Hawaii's Peal Harbor and Ford Island, under the Antiquities Act of 1906—the same legal mechanism the White House might use to establish a marine monument near the CNMI.

James Connaughton, the White House Council on Environmental Quality chief, toured American Memorial Park and historic sites elsewhere on the island Wednesday and said the White House's plan will help educate the public on the war in the Pacific and pay tribute to the sacrifices of those who fought in it.

"This is my first time to travel to Saipan and to see firsthand this memorial and the lasting legacy of what occurred here during the war," said Connaughton. "It was deeply moving."

Meeting with Connaughton, among others, was Tom Shaw, president of the Arizona Memorial Museum Association, an organization that funds educational work at several war era sites in the Pacific through gift shops and other activities. The White House's proposal, Shaw said, could open the door to new funding opportunities for American Memorial Park and War in the Pacific National Historical Park in Guam, which officials are considering for inclusion in the war monument. Designating the parks as part of the monument, he added, would change little if anything about how they currently operate but any added funding could, for example, improve maintenance.

"It could make the parks a lot better," he said, noting that the plan could lead to a wider array of educational opportunities for visitors at Pearl Harbor and other Pacific war sites to learn about the full scope of the conflict. "This is a huge opportunity to teach people about the war in the Pacific."

Among other sites under consideration under the monument plan are locations in Alaska's Aleutian Islands and even a military airfield in Nevada where bomber crews practiced dropping dummy versions of atomic bombs to train for later missions over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, he added.

As time passes, said Shaw, preserving these landmarks for posterity becomes even more critical.

"The memory, that collective memory of the war is being lost today," said Shaw. "It changed everyone's lives. It changed society. We need to keep that memory alive. It's too important to lose to time."

HOUSE

From Page 1

The fiscal year 2009 budget is on top of the agenda for the House session this afternoon. House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios yesterday said the Senate's budget proposal will be placed on the House floor for debate, and will likely be rejected.

If this occurs, the House and the Senate will each appoint members to a joint conference committee that will draft a bill acceptable to both houses.

"We will definitely reject the Senate substitute [to the bill originally passed by the House]," said Rep. Victor Hocog, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. "We want to do away with any austerity provisions. People are crying because of financial hardship. We don't want to add to their burden."

Under the Senate's version of the budget, government offices will be closed every other Friday from March 6, 2009 through Sept. 18, 2009—a total of 10 "austerity Fridays." In addition, a no-work-no-pay policy will be applied on the 13 remaining legal holidays within FY2009. Both provisions are designed to cut the government's personnel costs in the short term.

Hocog said the House differs with the Senate on several other issues, including retirement contributions and the appropriation for the Executive Branch. But these issues are less critical than the austerity provisions.

"The main focus of the conference committee would be the austerity measures. On any other provisions, I'm very positive we can reach an understanding pretty easily," he said.

The budget currently under deliberation is for the 2009 fiscal year, which covers the period from Oct. 1, 2008 to Sept. 30, 2009.

On Oct. 2, the House approved the original budget bill, appropriating $165.37 million in resources, including $156.7 million in projected government revenue, $5.17 million in Compact Impact aid, and $3.5 million of "unencumbered" funds from different accounts outside the general fund.

Last week, the Senate passed a substitute bill to replace the House-approved version. The substitute includes a host of changes to the House's proposal. The Senate version requires the CNMI government to pay the NMI Retirement Fund at the actuarially recommended rate of 37.4 percent, and not at an artificially reduced rate of 11 percent as earlier reported.

Other amendments include providing itemized appropriations for the Executive Branch, lowering the cap for full time government workers, the governor to submit for legislative appropriation any "cover-over" tax recoveries from the U.S. government, specifying appropriation for utility costs and protecting them from reprogramming to ensure the government can pay the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., and cutting the public auditor's fee from 1 percent to 0.75 percent of each agency's budget.

BODY

From Page 1

with two others while fishing. Benjamin Tejada, and his wife, Elsa Aldan, survived.

Palino was employed with Saipan Stevedore for 10 years and eight months. He lived in Kagman 2 with his wife and five children.

Ogumoro said DPS members were joined in the search by members of the Dive Rescue Team, Emergency Management Office, and Commonwealth Ports Authority. She said 10 divers were deployed for the sea search while Search and Rescue Unit members scoured the cliff lines.

Ogumoro said the search operation ceased at 9:58am, after the body was retrieved.

Ogumoro advised the public to refrain from fishing in areas where waves are high and ocean currents are strong. "Members of the community are strongly recommended to take precautionary measures when conducting fishing activities," she said.

Tejada, 52, a heavy equipment mechanic, said he was actually the first one who fell and was dragged out to sea after a wave that was "as big as a house" struck them.

Tejada said he and his wife, Aldan, had arrived at Marine Beach Tuesday at 8:30am to fish using a rod and reel. After a few minutes, Palino joined them.

He said the three atulai fish recovered by the rescue team on Tuesday were actually Palino bait as he was after a bigger catch.

Tejada said Palino did not manage to catch any fish because the incident happened about 30 minutes after the victim came.

Tejada said Palino was about 10 feet away from him, while Aldan was just on the side of the reef lines.

When the incident happened, Tejada said, Palino was wondering about the big waves, considering that it was low tide.

"As he mentioned the word waves, I suddenly saw a wave as big as a house coming at us," said Tejada in Tagalog.

Tejada said he was swept off the cliff area while Palino was pushed to the pool area. He said the wave twisted him and carried him out to the open sea.

"I was dragged under the sea. I had to remove the fishing line that was tangled around my body, then I decided to swim farther out from the cliff lines," Tejada said.

As he was swimming back to the cliff lines, he said another big wave came.

Tejada said he saw Palino being dragged out to sea and trying to stay afloat.

Tejada said that while underwater, he heard strange noises like the crying of people and other loud noises like cars and broken glasses, prompting him to cover his ears. He said he also saw an underwater cave and a big shark.

He said he almost lost consciousness because he had swallowed a lot of seawater and had to punch his stomach so he would vomit.

Tejada was later pinned between two rocks. When another wave hit him, his stomach hit the corrals.

"That helped because I vomited again," said Tejada, pointing to bruises in his body.

Tejada slowly climbed to the cliff line, where Aldan came and pulled him up.

Aldan said she brought Tejada to the side of the cliff line and ran to a nearby house where she asked for help from Adilihna Seman.

Seman, 51, called the police as her husband and Aldan went back to the beach.

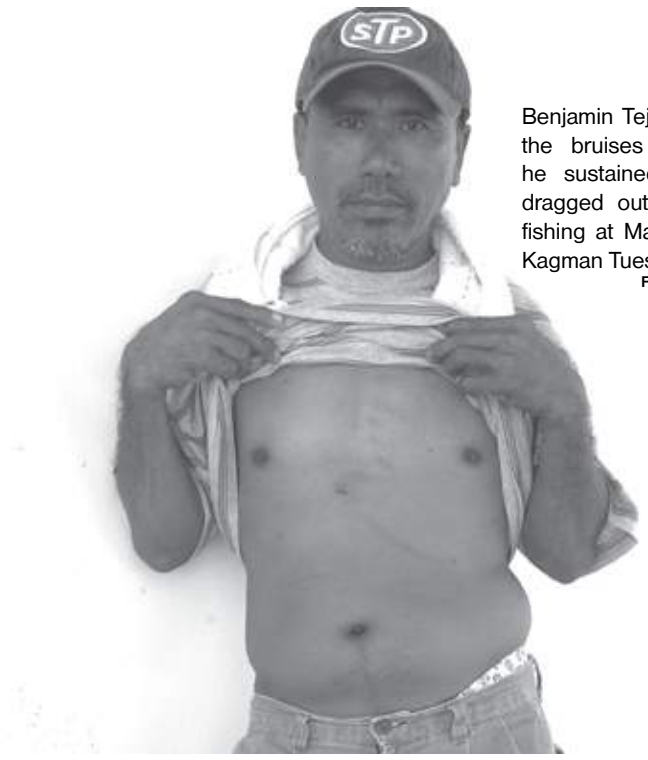
Aldan and Mr. Seman took the injured and very exhausted Tejada and brought him to shore.

Aldan said Mr. Seman had wanted to rescue Palino, whose body could be seen floating in the sea, but the waves were big and the current was rough.

Tejada suspects that Palino may have gotten entangled in his fishing line, that's why he could hardly swim.

DPS received the call of the incident Tuesday at 9:39am.

Search and Rescue teams, a DPS rescue boat, and a Navy helicopter responded to the area, but big waves hampered their recovery operation that day.



Benjamin Tejada shows off the bruises and wounds he sustained after being dragged out to sea while fishing at Marine Beach in Kagman Tuesday.
FERDIE DELA TORRE

FITCH

From Page 1

The double whammy means that Fitch expects CPA to continue experiencing near break-even operations in the near term, requiring the use of any excess funds it may have to sustain operations and meet debt service needs. Fitch warned that if CPA fails to find significant sources of new revenue soon, it might run out of money in two to three years.

The airport bonds are currently rated "CCC" and are secured by a pledge of net revenues, including passenger facility charge moneys. The rating for CPA's seaport bonds, meanwhile, fell from a "BB" to a "BBB."

Acting CPA director Ignacio Perez said the downgrading is due to the emergency declaration Gov. Benigno Fitial issued over CPA earlier this year and the dissolution of the agency's board.

Perez also pointed out that Fitch's findings are based on previously available data and with a new board of directors in place, CPA has begun walking the slow road to recovery. The board had resigned en masse earlier this year when the governor issued his emergency declaration over CPA, taking direct control of the agency.

The downgrading, he said, serves as a signal for investors whether or not they would want to invest in the bonds and will "not mean anything" with regard to CPA's ability to meet its bond obligation in the future.

Perez said the downgrade is linked to Fitial's declaration and the loss of the board this year.

"Because of the executive order and because of the resignations of all of the board and because of the deterioration from people who have resigned or retired, that has impacted the management," said Perez. "But as far as CPA is concerned, with the new board that has come in, they are very proactive and they're turning things around."

He added that CPA has begun once again hiring managers and cutting costs. New revenues from an increase in flights to the local airport will also give the agency a financial boost, he said.

CPA finances

According to a Fitch Rating statement issued yesterday, the Rating Watch Negative reflects further deterioration in the CPA's finances.

"Financial commitments are being met; however, capacity for continued payment is contingent upon a sustained favorable business and economic environment," the company said in the statement.

The downgrading of the seaport revenues also "reflects an approximately 40 percent decline in operating revenue" that has "significantly weakened the seaport's financial position," it added.

Fitch added that the downgrade is also due to CPA's "slow pace in acting to manage the revenue side of operations" and that in the near term, the agency will "continue to suffer operating losses."

The change in the rating, the company notes, is also due to a host of other factors outside of CPA's control, most related to the downturn in the CNMI's economy and the implementation of a higher local minimum wage.

Future prospects

To shore up its revenue base at the airport, CPA has applied for the PFC hardship program that would allow for greater use of PFC revenue to cover debt service. It may also be reimbursed by the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. for work done on airport property. Also, CPA is reviewing recommendations made by an airport consultant about revising its rates and charges.

"These are important developments for fiscal 2009. However, should these prospects fail to materialize, the depletion of cash balances could very well occur within two to three years," the Fitch statement said.

CPA currently has about $1.2 million in cash at the start of fiscal year 2008 and an annual debt service of $1.4 million. At the current rate, Fitch says that CPA's cash could be depleted within two to three years without a significant increase in revenue.

"Revised airline rates and charges, careful management of expenses and approval of additional PFC allocation for debt service could preserve liquidity beyond the near term," the Fitch statement said.

CPA owns and operates three airports in CNMI, the largest of which is Saipan International Airport.

Without an upswing in the CNMI's economy and passenger volume and larger PFC offsets, CPA's options to decrease operating deficits in future years include downsizing operations and implementing a cost-recovery airline rate structure.

WASC official here to train school administrators

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

An official from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges is on island today to train public and private school administrators about the accrediting process.

WASC associate executive director Marilyn George began the workshop yesterday and will continue today, as nine schools in the Public School System prepare to be evaluated this year.

"We're here working and learning together," George said.

She said PSS should be commended for choosing accreditation as a way to improve CNMI schools. Accreditation assures a community that the school's purposes are appropriate and being accomplished. It also allows school administrators to self-asses and manage changes.

Steve Smith, WASC coordinator for PSS, said George's visit is beneficial to the school system's leadership and administrators.

"She's probably the most high-powered person in the U.S. [for accreditation]," he said. "She really knows the job. Everybody's going to come out better than when they came in."

George is able to teach administrators things they might not otherwise be aware of, Smith said.

For example, each school needs to create a profile, listing the breakdown of students. Without it, he said, the school can't go anywhere.

"If you don't know who your school is, all you can do it create a general self-study," he said. "You need a profile, you need to know who you are."

Craig Garrison, vice principal at Saipan Southern High School, said the workshop has been informative and should help new administrators understand the accrediting process.

"There have been some leadership changes," he said. "For new school leaders this will help immensely. We need to be focused on this."

George visits the CNMI yearly to conduct the workshop. This year, administrators from the nine schools that will be evaluated were required to attend the workshop. Any other administrators, as well as private school officials, were welcome to attend, Smith said.

The nine public schools that will be evaluated starting in the spring are Dandan Elementary, William S. Reyes Elementary, San Antonio Elementary, Koblerville Elementary, Tinian Elementary, Tinian Junior High and High School, Rota High,Kagman High, and Saipan Southern High.

October 31st
Hauntings at PIC...
SPOOKTACULAR ACTIVITIES FOR WATERPARK PATRONS FROM 10 AM TO 5 PM
WATERPARK PASS - $20 PER PERSON
MAGELLAN & WATERPARK PROMO - $25 ADULT, $20 CHILD
A DRACULICIOUS MAGELLAN DINNER BUFFET TO FEAST UPON FROM 6:30 PM TO 9 PM
$32 ADULT, $16 CHILD
SINISTER PLOTS AWAIT THOSE WHO DARE ENTER PIC'S GORY HAUNTED HOUSE
DOORS OPEN AT 7 PM... $5 FEE
(FREE ENTRANCE FOR MAGELLAN DINNER PATRONS)
COSTUME CONTESTS FOR ADULTS & KIDS AT 8:45 PM IN CHARLEY'S
GHOULS, GOBLINS AND MONSTERS RAGE ON STAGE IN ELECTRIFYING PRODUCTION NUMBERS 9:15 PM ONWARDS
FREE ENTRANCE!
PACIFIC ISLANDS CLUB
for dinner reservations, call 234-7976 extension 5172 or 5132

Torres backs Fitial lawsuit vs federalization

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has found an unlikely ally in Rep. Stanley Torres, who came out yesterday in support of the administration's lawsuit against the U.S. government over the new immigration law.

Torres, probably one of the governor's staunchest critics, yesterday issued a statement defending Fitial's decision to sue the federal government, saying it was a "wise" move.

He mocked the criticism about the lawsuit and attributed most of them to "the usual we-hate-this-administration-whatever-they-do crowd and…a few crackpot bloggers."

Torres admitted that there are some reasonable arguments against the lawsuit. One such claim, he said, is that it is possible to talk with the federal agencies and work out all the problems without a lawsuit. But he also said that negotiation is unnecessary if the CNMI can get a court to rule that the pending federal takeover of CNMI immigration is unconstitutional.

"[T]here is no reason to beg federal agencies to draft regulations we can live with if those regs are never written because a court shows the U.S. Congress overstepped its bounds when it drafted the law to begin with," he said.

He added, "Once you get past all the hate speech and the hurt feelings and the misinformation, you will find as I have that there are some pretty good reasons to back Governor Fitial in his bid to find answers to some interesting and vitally important questions by suing in federal court. His administration's decision to 'let the courts decide' is, I believe, a wise one…."

Among the reasons he cited are the new labor and immigration system's potentially adverse impact on the economy and the CNMI's right to self-government. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

SaipanCell is now Docomo Pacific

SaipanCell Communications has "rebranded" itself as Docomo Pacific Inc., the company said in a statement issued Wednesday, when it also unveiled a new logo.

The company said its new moniker stems from that of its parent company, NTT Docomo and is "symbolic of the corporate evolution of both GuamCell and SaipanCell Communications.

Opened in 1991 GuamCell, a company that once had only five employees, has since grown to employ nearly 200 people, according to the statement. It opened SaipanCell in 1992, which now employs 26 people. The companies now have five retail outlets on Guam and Saipan.

NTT Docomo acquired the companies in December 2006. It provides mobile communications service to more than 53 million customers worldwide. ***(PR)***

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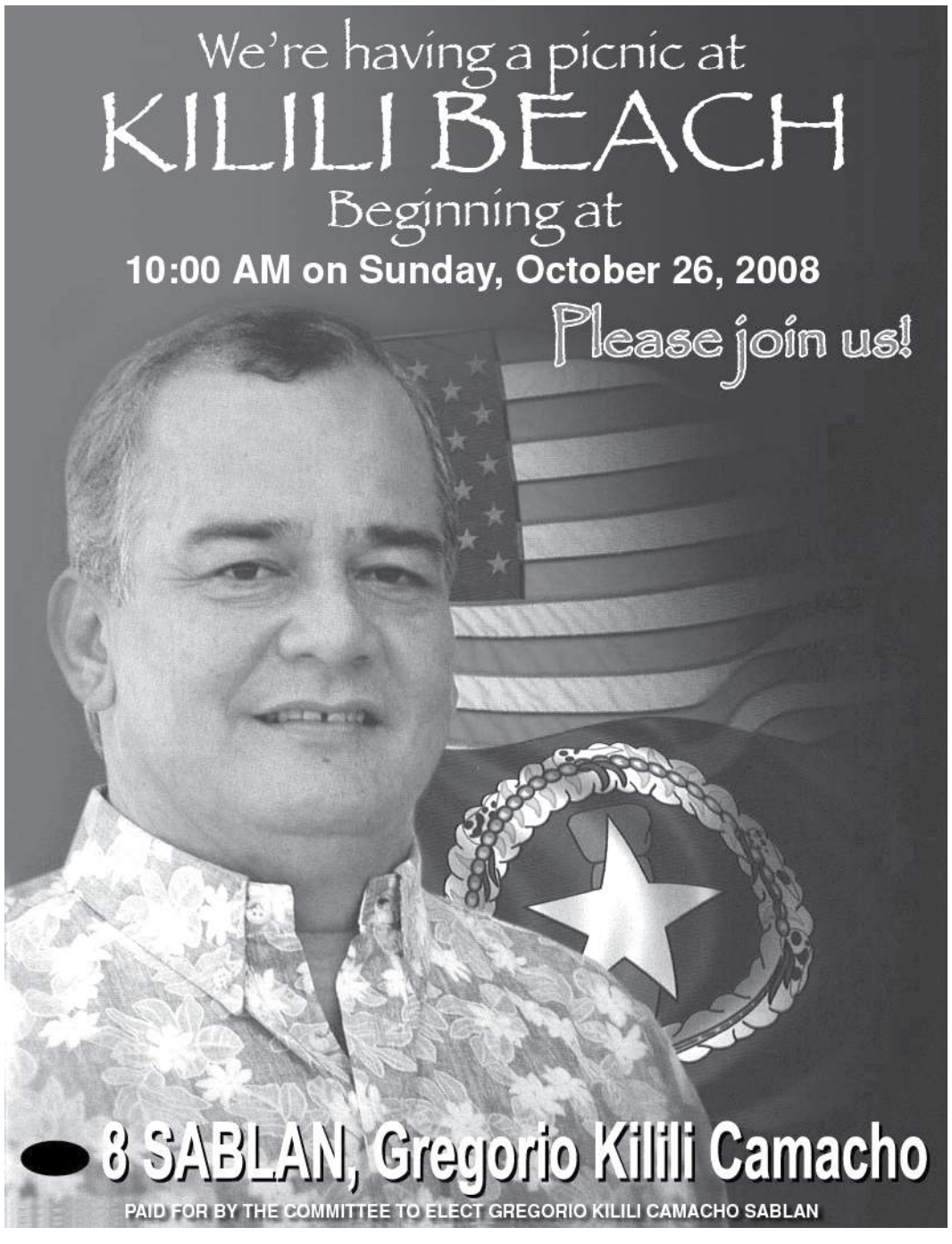

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Rev. Fr. Charlie A. Borja and the parishioners of San Jude Thaddeus Parish, cordially invite all the people of God to join them in celebrating the festivity in honor of their Patron Saint, St. Jude Thaddeus on Sunday, October 26, 2008. Your presence will be greatly appreciated.

FIESTA SCHEDULE– OCTOBER 26, 2008
8:00 AM– Novena
8:30 AM– Fiesta Mass

The Fiesta Mass Will Be Celebrated By His Excellency Bishop Tomas A. Camacho & Followed By Procession & Breakfast.

Novena is being said nightly at 5:30 PM and followed by the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at 6:00 PM. Thank You for Your Continued Support.
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CEQ chief: Monument could aid reefs worldwide

By STEFAN SEBASTIAN
stefan_sebastian@saipantribune.com
BUSINESS EDITOR

A marine monument in the ocean waters around the CNMI's northern islands could present a vital opportunity for governments worldwide to learn how to manage coral reefs better in the future and yield major scientific discoveries, White House Council on Environmental Quality director James Connaughton told members of Saipan's Rotary Club Tuesday afternoon.

The region proposed for the monument—a vast swath of water around the islands of Maug, Uracus and Asuncion—is a hotbed of geological activity that is found nowhere else on Earth, Connaughton said, home to a diverse array of aquatic species, and holds the potential to serve as the staging ground for a new era of undersea exploration.

As scientists study the pristine coral reefs around the islands, he added, what they are finding is changing how they evaluate reefs throughout the world and has led some to believe previous findings may "have been wrong."

The reefs in the waters at issue, he said, "don't look like coral reef ecosystems anywhere else on Earth" and as scientists learn more about them, the research could give governments the data they need to make "smarter management decisions."

STEFAN SEBASTIAN

White House CEQ Chief James Connaughton tells members of Saipan's Rotary Club Tuesday that the Bush administration's proposal to create a national marine monument in the CNMI could lead to major scientific discoveries.

Recent technological advancements, meanwhile, are beginning to give scientists a far greater ability to explore the world beneath the waves of the proposed monument's waters. The scientific community is now "on the brink of a major new wave of ocean exploration,' Connaughton said. "Wouldn't it be great if that could happen here?"

Moreover, the marine species living in the acidic environment near the region's undersea thermal vents are unique in such a way that they could offer scientists "the first and best opportunity to understand the origins of life," he said.

Connaughton also addressed a list of key concerns members of the community have raised about the monument proposal. On fears that the process of deciding whether to establish the monument is moving too fast in light of President Bush's rapidly approaching departure from the White House—which many opponents of the plan have suggested—Connaughton said that by declaring a monument, the president would merely begin a lengthy process of determining how to manage it in cooperation with the local government.

"The president doesn't decide all the management issues," he said, noting that the plan gives federal authorities the power to "act quickly but proceed deliberately."

Connaughton also sought to dispel concerns that the monument would bar access to the waters for local people and limit indigenous cultural practices there. Later this week, Connaughton plans to hold a second meeting with Gov. Benigno Fitial; the two met privately on Monday.

Ex-convict gets 1-year term for attempted theft

The Superior Court has imposed a one-year prison sentence on an ex-convict who was convicted of attempting to steal a large air-conditioner unit at a factory last year.

Associate Judge David Wiseman sentenced Ivan T. Dela Cruz to two and a half years in prison, all suspended except for one year. Wiseman gave the 35-year-old Dela Cruz credit for 70 days he has already served in jail.

The judge placed the defendant on four years' probation and required him to pay $4,000 in restitution to the American Textile Factory.

Dela Cruz was also ordered to pay a $100 fine and $100 court assessment fee and required to perform 300 hours of community service.

Dela Cruz was charged with one count of theft, two counts of criminal mischief, and one count of attempted theft for trying to steal the air-conditioner unit in October 2007.

The government also moved to revoke the defendant's probation in previous case for not obeying CNMI laws.

The defendant signed a plea agreement and pleaded guilty to attempted theft. He also conceded to violating his probation. ***(Ferdie dela Torre)***

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Engine 3 shut down for an hour

Engine 3 at Power Plant 1 was shut down yesterday for about an hour due to an electrical problem with the breaker.

The breaker affected the secondary water-cooling system, which automatically shut down the unit at 11:02 am, said Gary Camacho, acting Power Division manager for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

Feeder 4, covering portions of Lower Base, Sadog Tasi, Capital Hill, Kagman and portions of Papago (Botanical Garden), and feeder 7, covering Lower Base industrial area, north to Tanapag, Achugao, San Roque, As Matuis and Marpi, were affected.

Feeder 7 was back online at 11:54 am, while the first partial of feeder 4 was back at 11:54 and the second partial was up and running at 11:55, "which brought us up to normal conditions," Camacho said. ***(Kristi Eaton)***

VA opens veterans home program to territories

HAGÅTÑA, Guam—The Department of Veterans' Affairs, in response to Guam Delegate Madeleine Bordallo's letter of inquiry that requested a clarification of current policy regarding Guam's eligibility for State Home grant assistance, stated that it is amending the current VA regulations regarding grants for construction or acquisition of state homes to include Guam. The VA grants will allow for the funding of a state home for Guam.

The VA State Home Program is a partnership between the VA and the states or territories to construct nursing home, domiciliary, or adult health day care facilities. The VA grant can assist a state or territory with funding up to 65 percent of the cost of construction or acquisition of state nursing homes or for renovations to existing state homes. The VA State Home is owned and operated by the state.

"Secretary Peake has acknowledged that under the statute the territories should be eligible for this program and the VA will amend its regulations to allow territories to participate. This will enable Guam to pursue the establishment of a VA home or an adult health day care facility," Bordallo said. "As our veteran population ages it is important that Guam stay ahead of the curve by developing new programs, such as a Veterans Home, for elderly veterans." ***(PR)***

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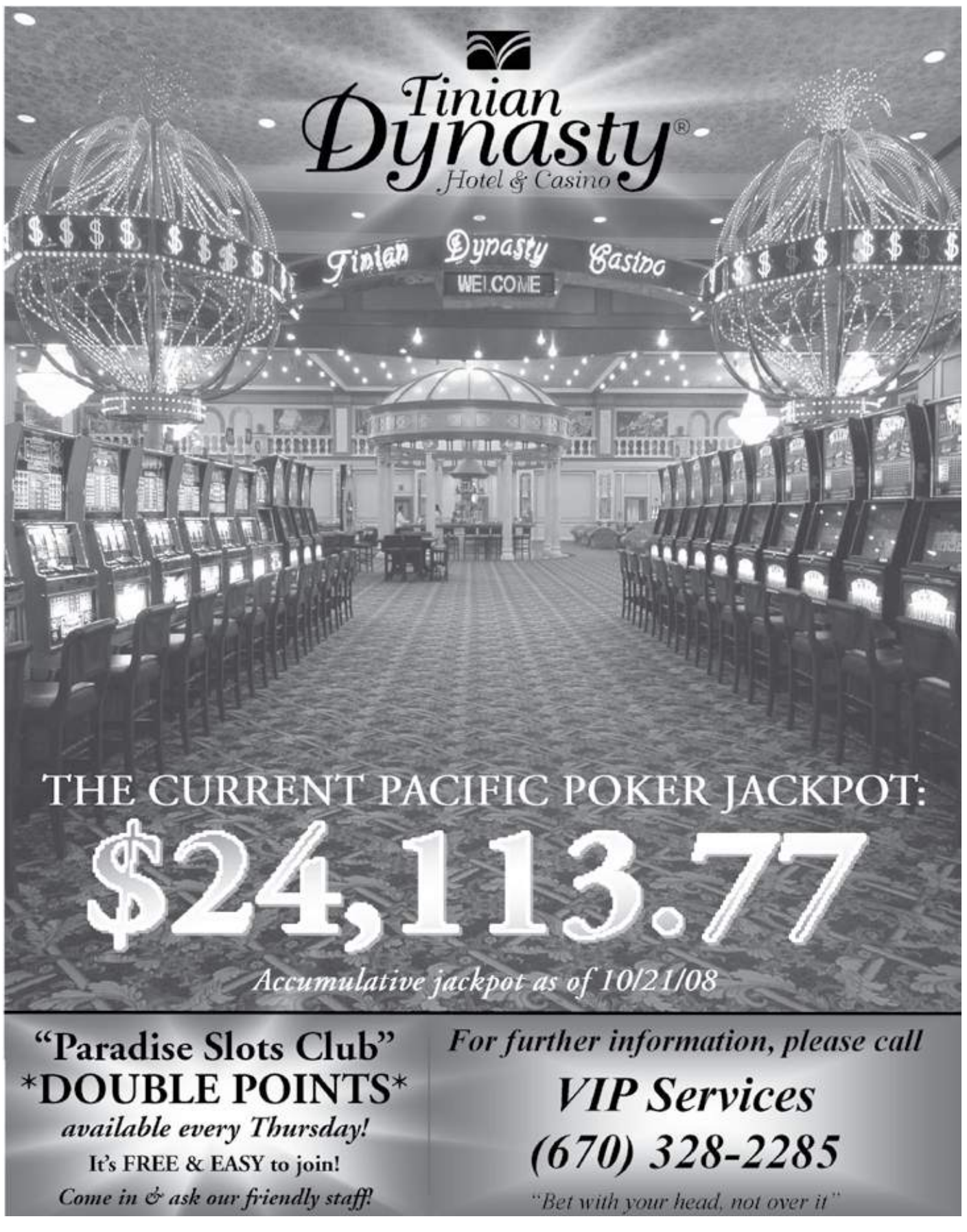

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

October 23, 2000

Tanapag residents presses DPH to release PCB test results

Tanapag residents have asked the Department of Public Health to facilitate the assessment of the results of their medical evaluation including the blood testing in connection with polychlorinated biphenyl contamination. Juan Tenorio, one of the leaders of Tanapag Action Group, said residents are anxious over the results of the blood test and they would like to find out as soon as possible the level of PCB contamination in their blood.

CNMI-bound cargoes come in trickles

Northern Marianas companies may have been keeping fewer inventories as a result of slow business activities here, manifested by the significant drop in the volume of CNMI-bound cargoes during the first half of the calendar year. A report obtained from the Department of Commerce quoting statistics from the Commonwealth Ports Authority disclosed a 13 percent decline in the volume of inbound revenue tonnage between January and June 2000.

October 23, 2001

Army Reserve eyed to secure NMI ports

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has asked the US Pacific Command for help in securing more men to guard the Commonwealth's airports, in line with the increased security level being enforced by the Federal Aviation Administration nationwide. As a possible solution to the manpower problem, Tenorio suggested activating the United States Army Reserve to augment the men that are now guarding the CNMI's airports.

Absentee ballots must be postmarked Nov. 3

The CNMI Commission on Elections yesterday said ballots cast by absentee voters should be completely answered, signed, and postmarked November 3 to be accepted and counted. Executive Director Greg Sablan reminded parents with children studying and working abroad to inform their kids to answer and sign all documents inside the absentee ballot package sent out by the commission.

October 23, 2002

Legislature requesting increase in salaries of LB staff

Despite increasingly hard-to-meet payroll costs by the CNMI government every payday, the Legislature is seeking to increase the salaries of its staff at the Legislative Bureau, prompting the Department of Finance to make a plea to hold off on the pay hikes. Finance Secretary Frank Villanueva pointed out that the present fiscal situation has severely affected the government's cash position, making it difficult to meet even the basic payroll costs.

How do we make graduates stay?

Discouraging prospects of a bountiful career is reportedly pushing some college graduates to pursue job opportunities outside the Northern Marianas. Scholarship Advisory Counsel Board Chair Roman C. Benavente yesterday said that around 80 to 90 percent of Education Assistance Program recipients come back to fulfill a pledge to serve the CNMI, only to be sent packing due to limited opportunities in both the private and public sectors.

October 23, 2003

'Make my job easier in DC'

Washington Rep. Pete A. Tenorio appealed to CNMI leaders to work harder at fostering better relations by setting aside longstanding differences in order to pursue a common goal for the entire Commonwealth. Tenorio made the comment this week following Gov. Juan N. Babauta's decision to veto the budget bill, an action that has not gained popular support from some Legislature members.

Continental launches Saipan-Manila flights

Citing strong consumer demand, Continental Micronesia yesterday disclosed it is introducing direct flights between Saipan and Manila beginning Dec. 9. Although Continental said the service initially ends by Jan. 16, 2004, the airline company bared it may make the direct flights permanent. Continental already has scheduled flights between the two destinations until the end of March.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XVIII, Issue No. 297

Published daily at 2/F CIC Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

What Colin Powell also said: His comments on Muslims in America bear repeating—and repeating

Naturally, what garnered the most attention on the day after former Secretary of State Colin Powell's endorsement of Sen. Barack Obama was its political significance. But we hope that another message that Mr. Powell tucked into his endorsement isn't forgotten.

Like many people before him, Mr. Powell rebuked those who have spread or fed the rumor that Mr. Obama is Muslim, and like many before him Mr. Powell reiterated that the story is false—that Mr. Obama is and always has been a Christian.

Mr. Powell then took the issue an important step further. "But the really right answer," Mr. Powell continued on NBC's "Meet the Press," "is, 'What if he is? Is there something wrong with being a Muslim in this country?' The answer is no, that's not America. Is there something wrong with some 7-year-old Muslim American kid believing that he or she could be president?"

When a supporter at a rally told Sen. John McCain that his opponent couldn't be trusted because he is an "Arab," Mr. McCain responded, "No, ma'am, he's a decent family man, a citizen, who I just happen to have disagreements with on fundamental issues." A good answer as far as it went, but incomplete; what was missing was, "And what if he were Arab American? Is there any reason an Arab American shouldn't be president of this country?" Nor has it been easy for the Obama campaign to knock down the rumors without seeming to give credence to the idea that the rumors, if true, would be somehow disqualifying.

That's why Mr. Powell, unhindered by such calculations, deserves thanks for the lesson on tolerance. This is not, by its Constitution, a Christian country, or a Judeo-Christian country, or even a God-fearing country. It is a democracy where any "natural born Citizen" who has "attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States" can be president. We need all the talent we can attract to government, and we hope every 7-year-old girl or boy keeps that in mind, along with Mr. Powell's words.

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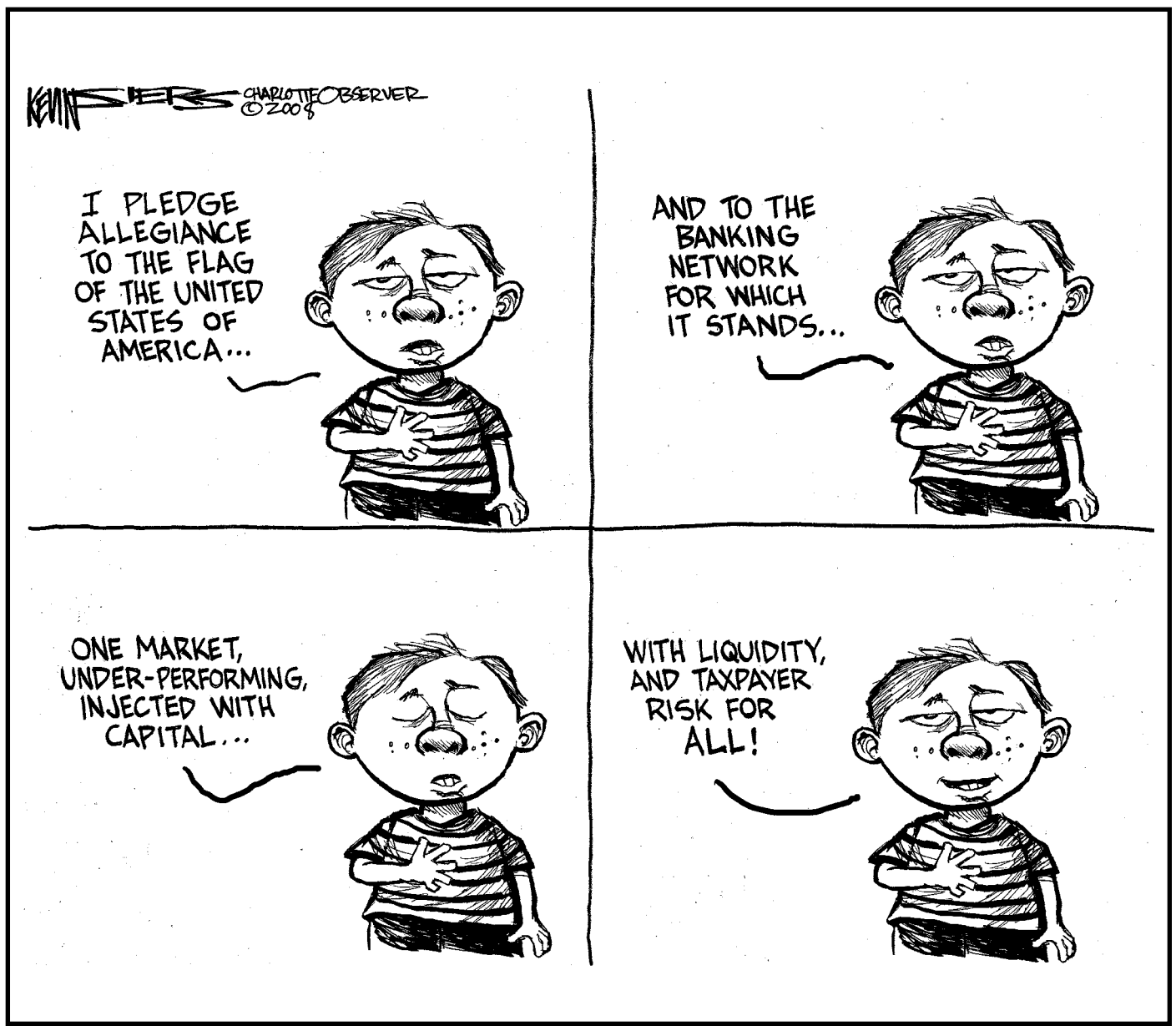
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Block-busted

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is a partner with BizResults, LLC (www.bizresults.org). They can be contacted at biz_results@yahoo.com.

The speed at which word-of-mouth communication spreads was demonstrated Tuesday when customers learned that Blockbuster was closing it doors and all their DVDs were being sold for $2 or less. We didn't get the word until later in the day, and by that time the store had already been picked over by hundreds of people looking for a bargain.

We had to stand in shifts and wait for several hours before our small box of DVDs could be scanned. Many individuals in front of us had several big boxes loaded with hundreds of movies, and by the time we exited the doors after 1:00 a.m., the store was pretty much gutted. It was learned that whatever wasn't sold on Tuesday would be boxed up and shipped to the Blockbuster in Guam.

This isn't just another incident in our deteriorating economic landscape. One person standing in line said that four Blockbuster stores in Hawaii are closing their doors, and a search on the Internet revealed four Blockbusters in Albuquerque, New Mexico closed, as well as in Alamogordo and Sante Fe. Stores in Bozeman, Montana, Santa Maria, California, and Rexburg, Idaho also followed suit. Blockbuster once ruled the video rental business. Just five years ago its stock traded for more than $20, whereas now it is struggling to trade at $2. The company appears to be going through a shakedown due to a number of factors, but they all result in lower profit margins. Blockbuster isn't the only company having difficulty in video rental. The number of both large chain video rental stores and independently owned stores has dwindled for years.

The Saipan store was being subsidized and not making enough money for quite awhile. While other Blockbuster locations rent their movies for $4 or $5, the Saipan store couldn't compete with the other local outlets and had to drop its fee to $2.99, which meant that their contribution to overhead was too slim to make it worthwhile for the corporation to keep the doors open. The employees were surprised to learn when they showed up to work on Tuesday that the store would be closing. Those who checked out videos would not need to return them, but also individuals that had recently renewed their video Rewards card would be out of luck. The owner of Hollywood Video was allowed to take the first pick, and then the customers scavenged the remaining DVDs.

I remember living in California in the early 1980s when video rental stores were still new. They actually started in the late 70s, when VHS, the BETA format, and the large videodisc were battling for supremacy. By the mid-1980s, VHS players and recorders were a must-have item for people, and entrepreneurs capitalized on the trend. At that time, the stores were at the beginning of the product life cycle curve and they rode the wave for a couple of decades, making some adjustments when DVDs became the new thing.

Big chains, like Blockbuster, dominated the industry in the 1990s, and they made it more difficult for the smaller stores with less of a selection, to stay in business. With the emergence of movie downloading, video streaming, video-on-demand, mail-order rental, and renting on the Web, even the big chains are being shackled and going through contortions to keep up with the rapidly changing video business. Certainly, pirated DVDs that are so prevalent at many establishments on Saipan also contributed to the demise of our Blockbuster.

There are several lessons that one can learn from this situation. The first is that change is continuous, and in order to stay in business, one must stay ahead of the curve. One way to do that is to diversify or offer unique products or services that keep your customer base active. Blockbuster stores in other areas are pushing movie memorabilia in their stores to keep sales up. Even though small, independent businesses are at a disadvantage to the larger retailers, they also have the ability to adapt to change faster and easier than their much bigger competitors.

In addition, a smaller company can easily keep an open ear to the needs of their customers, and make adjustments that cater to those needs. Consumers have more options available to them today, and you must constantly stay on top of those options and have a plan to counter its impact on your business. Service never goes out of style, and the better you serve your customers, the more likely they will stay loyal to your company.

The Blockbuster on Saipan did everything it could to stay in business, but fell victim to the changes being made in the industry and the high operating costs. Nevertheless, its customers who liked the friendly employees, wide selection, and generous rental policy will sorely miss Blockbuster.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Letters to the Editor

Open letters to President Bush

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

The Friends of the Monument was formed in the spring of 2008 to express the voice of the local community and consists of a cross-section of indigenous and resident people of the CNMI who are dedicated to the conservation, preservation and protection of marine flora, fauna and geological features of the oceans; and the creation and proper management of a Marianas Trench Marine National Monument.

We, the Friends of the Marinas Trench Marine Monument, thank you and support your interest in declaring the marine ecosystems surrounding the three northernmost islands of Uracus, Maug, and Asuncion as a marine national monument, in accordance with the Antiquities Act of 1906. Declaring the waters as a monument under the Act would expedite the process of bringing protection to the precious resources found in the waters there, while establishing specific federal responsibilities toward governance of the monument, and enhancing our ocean legacy.

Additionally, we ask that you specifically include in the language of the Executive Order under the Antiquities Act that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, through its National Marine Sanctuaries Program, be the federal agency that administers, co-manages, and enforces the monument, along with the CNMI.

Furthermore, any co-management agreement must anticipate unknowns and allow for responsible change. The management arrangement, goals, and objectives of the monument should be reviewed on a regular 10-year basis.

The health of the world's oceans has declined drastically over the past several hundred years, and we believe the most effective means of restoring their wellbeing is through the setting aside of large no-take zones or sanctuaries, such as the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument. This would offer marine life a safe haven.

We believe that the creation of a monument in our northern waters would generate many benefits for the CNMI. The monument will enhance the stature of the CNMI on the world stage as a contributor toward the revitalization of the world's oceans, and as a contributor to the Micronesia Challenge to set aside and effectively conserve 30 percent of the region's near-shore resources by 2020. The monument would also provide countless benefits to the people of the CNMI.

We have taken the liberty of spelling out a number of the benefits, in the form of a vision that we believe would accrue from the monument. These fall into six categories: management and enforcement, culture and tradition, conservation, education, research, and economic development, which we address, in turn, below.

Management and Enforcement, by which we mean not only management of the monument once it is declared, but also the process of defining how the monument would function once it is established.

The Friends envision that the federal and local government officials will co-manage the monument. We would like the Friends to be involve in this co-management; we are sure that there are innovative means for our members' support and contribution. For example, we hope that the initial Advisory Committee for the Monument includes members of the Friends and other conservation-minded people who actively supported the creation of the monument.

Additionally, critical to see these efforts are the necessary resources to enforce any protections established by a special designations. With this regard, we would request your assistance with the necessary equipment, training and support to properly enforce the designated area. We envision having planes and boats for enforcement and patrol. In order to better manage and enforce the protections of the monument, we suggest that all vessels entering the monument area should be required to carry a VMS tracking system and adopt strict invasive marine and terrestrial species prevention measures.

Culture and Tradition, by which we mean the lifestyle, practices and beliefs of the Chamorro and Carolinian peoples that have been handed down from generation to generation.

The Friends believe, first of all, that the Chamorro and Carolinian cultures and tradition must be treated with respect, and taken into full account in decisions that are made about the management and use of the monument. We should take into consideration the precepts of our indigenous culture and tradition when deciding issues like, for example, sustenance fishing, canoe travel and other similar matters.

Conservation, by which we mean the protection and preservation of the marine ecosystems and their interrelationship with land ecosystems; and their continued presence and existence in the future.

The proposed monument contains some of the world's most unique habitats and unusual features, such as chemosynthetic and photosynthetic organisms living side-by-side, mud volcanoes, vent communities and other natural wonders. One of these is volcanic coral reefs, which occur nowhere else in Micronesia. The coral reefs that exist there are flourishing and vibrant, and need protection to help guard our planet from the threat of global warming and potentially act as a source of corals for other marine areas.

The Friends acknowledge that people of the CNMI and the world have historically relied on the oceans for food and other resources. We believe that the need for continued availability of our precious, limited marine resources does not conflict with conservation. We believe that creating the monument will help increase the oceans' abundance by contributing to the survival and recovery of depleted marine resources and biodiversity.

Education, by which we mean both formal and informal education, for students as well as the public, for residents as well as the rest of the world, in all relevant media formats, produced both commercially and non-commercially.

The Friends believe that funding should be made available to enable oceanography to be taught in schools, at the college and through lectures and programs for the public, and to ensure that pertinent education materials will be readily available, that careers in the marine and geological science will be encouraged, that opportunities for field trips for students, teachers, the general public and tourist should be made available.

We envision a Visitors' Center, including a centrally-located facility funded under the auspices of the NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries Program that would be open to everyone that would contain not only displays of various sorts, but would also offer related items for sale.

The Friends believe that the Visitors' Center would bring benefits not only to the local economy by attracting tourist, but to the people of the CNMI as it would showcase information about marine geology in general, about the monument in particular, about the CNMI, and about its indigenous history and culture to all who visit it; it would present, in a variety of formats, the results of marine research done in the area and relevant research done elsewhere; it would regularly present programs open to the public on matters related to marine life in general as well as marine life specific to the area, thus allowing the people of the CNMI, tourists, and other visitors to benefit from the establishment of the monument.

It is our dream that this monument will inspire and contribute to the first indigenous students receiving their Ph.D. in marine biology, deep-sea geology, or other related sciences.

Research, by which we mean the process of studying marine life, geology and other sciences, and of data generation, as well as the products of such activity generated by scientists, teachers, or students.

The Friends believe the researchers and scientists who base their work on the marine monument and its environs should be asked to obtain permission prior to undertaking research in the area and should share the information they garner with the local community through presentations at the Visitors' Center or in other forms and forums. They should make accommodations to take along local students and teachers on research trips, so that local students are encouraged to become scientist and researchers.

Economic Development, by which we mean assistance in improving the economy toward enabling the CNMI to become self-sufficient. The CNMI, being a small island with limited assets, will always be dependent to some extent on outside forces and influences, but certainly more is needed and can be done to increase independence.

There are many great economic benefits that we anticipate from the monument. We envision a surge in the media attention from your designation of the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument, which will attract more visitors to the CNMI. The CNMI relies heavily on tourism as its number one industry, and help to this sector of economy—whether from traditional or high-end visitors—will have a significant beneficial impact. The monument will likely attract scientists and other researchers, who will contribute financially while visiting or living here. The operation of the Visitors' Center and administration of the monument will create jobs, both directly and indirectly.

The contribution that a monument would make to the CNMI economy is in stark contrast to the present situation, where the only economic benefit that presently occurs from this significant resource is limited to illegal foreign fishing activities, such as shark finning. Obviously, this current economic activity has little benefit to the CNMI.

The Friends believe that the anticipated economic activities from the monument are much more suited to the CNMI's image in the world and more productive of tangible benefits. The increased flow of traffic from Saipan, Tinian, and Rota to the monument would also benefit the people of the CNMI in that it would make more feasible resettlement of the Northern Islands and provide transportation and communication with the "lower" Northern Islands.

We envision the northern island of Pagan being used as a staging area for research, fuel storage facility, and other needs. Of particular benefit would be the expansion of the landing strip for easier and faster access. The provision of the floating dock could preserve its unique black and beach.

Greater protection of our monument resources from illegal fishing, exploitation, or harvesting will also help our fishermen who follow the law to stay competitive.

In conclusion, the Friends of the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument hope that you make the designation of this monument soon and expressly give it the highest possible protections available by law.

Ignacio V. Cabrera
Chair, Friends of the Monument

Agnes McPhetres
Vice Chair, Friends of the Monument

Andrew Salas
Vice Chair, Friends of the Monument

Belinda Norita
MarjaLee Taitano
Ken Kramer
Chailang Palacios
Karl T. Reyes
Jane Mack
Cinta M. Kaipat
Emelain D. Fejeran
Wes Bogdan
Lynn Knight
David M. Sablan
Ruth L. Tighe

Hafa Adai President Bush:

Greetings from the Northern Marianas Islands. It is an honor to be writing to you about an issue so important to me personally and my community here in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. As you know, our local economy has suffered along with the global economy of late. As a former director of Commerce for the CNMI government, as well as former two times president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and a current business owner on Saipan, I am very concerned about the long term economic future of our beautiful islands out here in the Micronesia/Pacific Region.

The garment industry, long an important part of economy, will soon completely vanish. Our economy has been and will continue to revolve around the tourist industry. While tourism has a great potential here, the visitor industry is very competitive and many destinations are competing for tourism dollars. The CNMI needs to set itself apart from other tourist destinations in Micronesia and throughout the Pacific.

We now have an opportunity to support a project that will benefit our tourist industry, the proposed Mariana Trench Marine Monument, in the wasters around the northern three Mariana islands of Uracus, Maug, and Asuncion. This is a remote area that provides little or no economic benefit to us right now, but if federal money is available for protecting, promoting and managing this area as a spectacular park, it would be a very important asset for our community, the nation, and the world. It will draw favorable international attention to the CNMI, which will help tourism and boost our economy. Papahanaumokuakea is already generating positive returns for the people of Hawaii. A Mariana Trench Monument can do the same for us.

Now is the time for the CNMI to be recognized and to move to advance its economic outlook. I believe it's a good idea for our economy, our future, our environment, our nation and, in the bigger scheme of things, our home we call Planet Earth that I ask you to create the monument.

Finally, you will be leaving the office real soon. You've accomplished so much throughout your term as President of the United States of America and it will be fitting and a legacy of your Presidency to contribute in a small way toward helping the people of the world preserve whatever little is left of the unique natural environment that exists around the world. Creating the monument will cement your place in history and at the same time assist our community here in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands preserve the three islands' natural environment for generations to come.

Si yuus maase, thank you, and God bless America!

Jose Cruz Ayuyu
Owner, McDonald's of Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲89° ▼78°	▲88° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

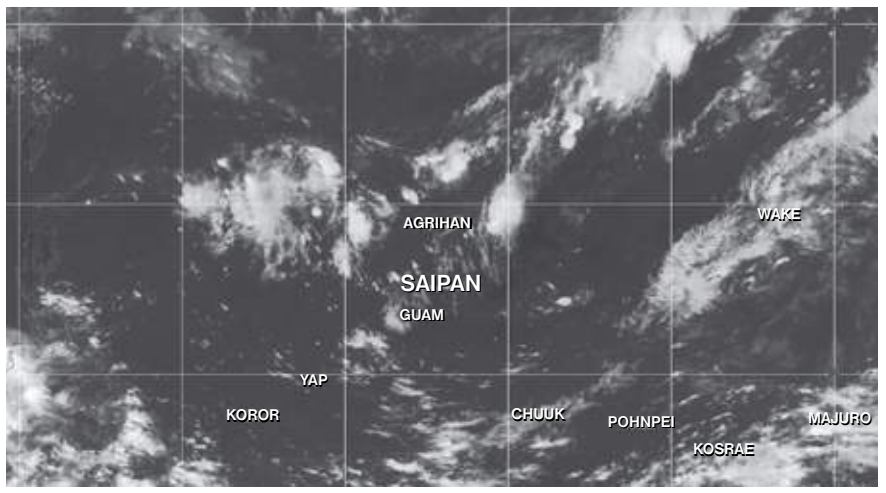
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Sunny	▲85	▼77
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼77
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼76
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼77
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼75
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼78
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼77

Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲68	▼58
Beijing	Sunny	▲55	▼34
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲86	▼75
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲83	▼75
London	Mostly Cloudy	▲59	▼46
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲90	▼56
Manila	Mostly Cloudy	▲88	▼77
Melbourne	Partly Sunny	▲69	▼56
Miami	Thunderstorms	▲83	▼76
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲55	▼42
Osaka	Rain	▲70	▼61
Paris	Partly Sunny	▲55	▼45
Pusan	Rain	▲72	▼44
Rome	Showers	▲73	▼58
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲65	▼42
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲80	▼52
Seoul	Showers	▲61	▼43
Tokyo	Rain	▲72	▼61
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲56	▼43

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2008
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weakening cold front extends west-southwestward from 25N155E to 21N135E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are found within 50 miles of the front between 145E and 155E and within an area bounded by a line from 23N135E to 20N130E to 17N137E to 17N140E to 20N142E back to 23N135E. A surface trough extends northeastward through the Mariana Islands or from 15N143E to 23N150E. Convergence near and to the east of the trough coupled with favorable divergence aloft is triggering scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over the central Mariana Islands within 100 miles of the trough axis. Several surface troughs embedded within converging trade-winds are causing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Koror southwest of a line extending northwestward from EQ135E to 5N130E and over Kosrae and the Marshall Islands within an area bounded by a line from 13N176E to 2N157E to 5N173E back to 13N176E. An upper-level trough extends northeastward from near 10N147E through an upper-level low pressure centered at 18N154E to beyond 25N at 165E. Extensive cloud-cover, scattered showers and a few thunderstorms can be found between Yap and Koror within an area bounded by a line from 8N142E to 2N143E to 4N152E to 7N152E back to 8N142E and within 100 miles of a line extending northeastward from 13N149E to 25N173E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

1:17AM Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet
8:54AM Today	Low Tide:	0.0 Feet
4:19PM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
10:16PM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:10AM	5:52 PM
Friday	6:11AM	5:52 PM
Saturday	6:11AM	5:51 PM
Sunday	6:11AM	5:51 PM
Monday	6:11AM	5:51 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	12:59AM	1:58PM
Friday	1:54AM	2:38PM
Saturday	2:47AM	3:16PM
Sunday	3:38AM	3:53PM
Monday	3:38AM	3:53PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7

Saipan-Guam

CO9317	4:00am	4:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 099	5:00am	7:30am	Daily
NW 078	8:55am	2:00pm	Daily
NW 075	4:55pm	7:25pm	Daily

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083	4:20pm	6:55pm	Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078	8:55am	11:35am	Daily

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:50am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608	3:50am	7:20am	1,5

Saipan-Shanghai

FM 844	3:15am	5:55am	2,6

Rota-Guam

CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7

Guam-Manila

CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	7:00pm	8:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan

CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6

Guam-Saipan

CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

Narita-Saipan

NW 076	10:15am	2:50pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:30am+1	Daily
NW 100	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily

Osaka-Saipan

NW 084	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

Nagoya-Saipan

NW 077	9:00pm	1:30am+1	Daily

Seoul-Saipan

OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6

Busan-Saipan

OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	4,7

Shanghai-Saipan

FM 843	7:50pm	2:15am+1	1,5

Guam-Rota

CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6

Manila-Guam

CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	10:55pm	4:30am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:20pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Sunday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $182. Off-island subscription rate is $376 per year. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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$7.49 /case

Marca Del Rey Chorizos
$21.00 /can

Folgers Decaf
39 oz.
$7.99 /each

Chicken Leg Quarter
22#
$18.99 /case

Charmin Toilet Tissue
24 rolls
$7.99 /pkg.

Pepsi Products
24/12 oz.
$12.99 /case

Coke Products
24/12 oz.
$12.99 /case

Budweiser Budlight
24/12 oz.
$24.50 /case

Lite Beer
24/12 oz.
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Letters to the Editor

Monument-al fallacies

If we peel away some of the layers of thoughts and ideas that surround the monument, the base ideas reveal themselves and become a bit more clear. These ideas may be a bit different than what you think, regardless of your pro/against stance.

Let's look at the first and foremost of the ideas: the environment. Monuments and other MPAs' main driving force is the thought of protection of the natural world by restricting human interaction. Others and I have covered this: human beings rarely visit the proposed area and have very, very little impact on the environment there. The monument will not change this, period. Almost no U.S.-flagged vessels fish there, and no U.S.-flagged mining activity takes place. Foreign fishing vessels coming into U.S. waters to fish in the CNMI are not a priority for the USCG, for the armed forces or Homeland Security. The monument will not do any environmental healing.

The next idea is this: Pollution, overfishing and runoff around the world are killing the oceans, and we need to protect the natural gems that still remain. I agree that human activity is destroying the ocean's life. The key question is this: How does the monument protect the natural gem? It's the same question as the first one and the answer is it will not in any way shape or form. It comes down to this: show everyone what is destroying what, and how the monument will stop this from taking place.

Another idea is the positive economic effect. It will create jobs and inject money that will flow around the island. Great. I hope those jobs will go to people of the CNMI—but guess what—that is very unlikely. Just how many unemployed marine scientists are in the CNMI? How many of these new businesses will employ citizens for jobs that could easily go to contract workers? What changes with the enactment of the monument that will make a business profitable that would otherwise fail? Scientists and others can do all the business they want now but how many are? None. Why are there none? Why would they suddenly flock here? Would the feds do any better up there than they have at American Memorial Park? Studies that conclude there would be increased money flowing and jobs are fine but if those jobs do not go to local citizens, what is the point?

Another base idea is that perhaps there is not activity now, but a monument will become a no-take zone and stop future fishing or extraction. Wait one of two news flashes: James Connaughton said President Bush's bid to establish a national marine monument in the waters around the CNMI's northern islands could let some economic activity like undersea mining take place there and restore much of the local government's control over near-shore ocean resources. Uh, what? We can mine now, and we can mine if there is a monument? What's the point of the monument then? Is he really telling the truth or just what it takes to get the monument passed? Remember he and his department will benefit with the passing of the monument—it's a clear conflict of interest. How about fishing? Recreational and subsistence fishing most likely will *increase* as the result of the monument. There is little to no legal fishing there now, but as the islands become a focal point of attention, people will want to go there. They will want to fish there, and it will become much easier to convince someone to go there just to do so. Think of it: "I fished the marine monument!" versus "I fished up north of Saipan." Which has a greater sound to you? Anglers would be more likely to want to fish the monument. Great for me if I'm the guy driving the boat that takes them there, but how is it better for those that wish for an MPA with a no-take zone? Ken Kramer even writes how a no-take zone is important. You may be correct Ken, but read my previous letters and you will see your point is moot. Even worse is that fishing may increase inside the monument, so if no-take is best and a monument may increase fishing, then you should be against the monument.

Oh, how does fishing take place inside a no-take MPA like the monument? News flash No. 2: Washington, DC (September 29, 2008)—President George W. Bush signed an amendment to Executive Order 12962 which allows for the most significant extension of recreational fishing on federal lands and waters in the last 30 years. President Bush's order states that *"recreational fishing shall be managed as a sustainable activity in national wildlife refuges, national parks, national monuments, marine sanctuaries, marine protected areas or any other relevant conservation or management area."* Fishing *must* be allowed inside Fed monuments—but this order does not include local or state monuments. Perhaps we should be looking at a CNMI monument instead of a Fed monument.

So there are a few of the base ideas of the monument. Please refute my major points in this and other letters, supporters. I'd love to be driving the 100 footer for a business that employs dozens of locals—on the boat and on land. I'd hate to see the monument come into being and more contract workers are hired for the low paying jobs, off-islanders get the upper jobs, and the CNMI gets nothing concrete.

I am not against monuments or curtailing commercial fishing to help restore the oceans, near and far. I think commercial fishing around the planet needs major reform. I believe the oceans need our help. I was one of the first recreational fishing captains on Saipan who practiced catch and release of both inshore and offshore fishes. I do so today—just last week we caught more than a dozen sharks up to 300 pounds, all released. In the last four years I have caught more than 300 sharks. We have killed four of them—and we ate them. Responsible stewardship of the oceans is my job as a big game sportfishing captain. I am on the front lines, I am on the water, I deal with multiple local, state and federal laws and regulations daily. Change is needed, and I hope an idea that will actually do something good will come out of this. I do not believe in its current form the monument solves anything, or does any good.

William McCue
Wellington, Florida

Taotao Tano's position on the marine monument proposal

In the beginning, this marine national monument sounded like it was the right thing to do with our three northernmost islands for it apparently would bring the CNMI several benefits—national media attention, further education in marine and conservation studies, millions in federal funding, and jobs and scientists from all over the world. We appreciate all this good news but we have to hold off a minute as we have some serious questions as to the intent of the U.S. federal government when it applies the paramountcy doctrine in both cases filed with the Ninth Circuit of Appeals by our government. We lost both of those cases, and we are especially concerned with the arguments raised by our government and also with whether the United States is following its own stated intent in those cases: foreign affairs and defense.

On Feb. 24, 2005, the CNMI brought this action under the Quiet Title Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2409a, requesting a declaration that the Commonwealth holds title to—or for an order mandating that the United States quitclaim any interests in—the submerged lands "underlying the internal waters, archipelagic waters, and territorial waters adjacent to the Northern Mariana Islands." The CNMI further requested the court to enjoin the United States from claiming ownership of the submerged lands. The United States counterclaimed. After resolution of some procedural hurdles, both parties filed for summary judgment. The district court granted the United States' motion, declaring that the "United States possesses paramount rights in and powers over the waters extending seaward of the ordinary low water mark of the Commonwealth coast and the lands, minerals, and other things of value underlying such waters." The court also declared that the CNMI's Marine Sovereignty Act of 1980, 2 N. Mar. I.Code § 1101-1143 (1999), and Submerged Lands Act, 2 N. Mar. I.Code § 1201-1231 (1999), were preempted by federal law. The CNMI appealed this decision to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Supreme Court established the paramountcy doctrine through a series of cases between the federal government and shoreline states. In one case regarding the state of California, the court held that the national government had paramount rights to submerged lands off the shores of states created from former United States territories (332 U.S. at 38, 67 S.Ct. 1658). The Court based its decision on theories of national interest and defense, concluding that because the sea had customarily been within the realm of international law, the federal government had an overriding interest in maintaining authority over these areas that were subject to international dispute and settlement. *Id.* at 34-36, 67 S.Ct. 1658. As the court explained a few years later in *United States v. Louisiana,* 339 U.S. 699, 704, 70 S.Ct. 914, 94 L.Ed. 1216 (1950): *The marginal sea is a national, not a state concern. National interests, national responsibilities, national concerns are involved. The problems of commerce, national defense, relations with other powers, war and peace focus there. National rights must therefore be paramount in that area.*

Taotao Tano's questions and would like clarification as to what the court's decision means in terms of national interest vs. a national monument to *be* placed in our northernmost islands. The United States arguments in both cases were of paramountcy doctrine, which draws its authority from the inherent obligations placed on the sovereign governing entity to conduct international affairs and control matters of national concern. *See California,* 332 U.S. at 35-36, 67 S.Ct. 1658; *see also Eyak I,* 154 F.3d at 1096 ("This principle applies with equal force to *all* entities claiming rights to the ocean[.]"). The Covenant unquestionably places these powers and obligations in the United States. *See* Covenant § 101 (establishing a Commonwealth "in political union with and under the sovereignty of the United States of America"); *id.* § 104 (providing the United States with "complete responsibility for and authority with respect to matters relating to foreign affairs and defense"). The CNMI's attempt to differentiate between a paramountcy doctrine based on powers found solely in the U.S. Constitution and one that is incorporated through the Covenant separates the doctrine from its rationale.

Since we now have this question and concern, we believe that the case should be brought back to court and challenged; if not, then we should be given the opportunity to hold off on this monument proposal until our non-voting delegate to U.S. Congress is elected into office and has the opportunity to raise these important issues before Congress. Before that, we must ensure that we put the right person with experience in legal matters, who is legal minded and with the legal expertise to address this in Congress and deliver what is in our best interest before any national monument is put in place. This is not to say that a national monument is a bad idea, but we the people of the Commonwealth, the Northern Mariana descent Chamorro and Carolinian people of the land, must be given the due regard and respect to address such an important question pertaining to the paramountcy doctrine applied in the taking of our Submerged lands.

To rush into this national monument without clarifications on an important question and concern will be an injustice to the Northern Mariana descent people of the land, to include that the United States government will be endangering human lives if it actually authorizes such a monument to be put in place, contradicting its actual intent and purpose when they applied the paramountcy doctrine to take control and full authority of our submerged lands.

Gregorio Cruz Jr.
Taotao Tano CNMI Inc.

Resolve submerged lands, EEZ issues first

The Pew proposal for a marine monument touches on the many unresolved questions concerning the CNMI's rights to submerged lands and economic zone. A federal circuit court of appeals has decided that the CNMI lost ownership of the submerged lands at the time the Covenant was signed. Although the federal court's interpretation of the issue is settled, the CNMI still can seek redress in Congress to regain some of the submerged lands. I believe that the submerged lands issue must be settled in Congress before a final decision to erect the proposed Pew monument is made. I would hope that those who run and support Pew would agree. Taking steps in this order will help clear up the mistrust that has been generated by what seems to be a push to hastily finalize the marine monument before the people of the CNMI are comfortable with it.

The President and Congress should not to take action on the marine monument until our issues concerning the submerged lands and economic zone are resolved. We must work with Congress to resolve the CNMI's submerged lands issue and simultaneously negotiate the details of our economic zone. After completing those issues, that's when we should work with Pew to help establish a marine monument to preserve our islands' beauty, native species, and our culture for future generations. We must jointly be involved in the process with the experts.

Some candidates for delegate are promising they will deliver the moon, but we must remain realistic. My position is that the CNMI must be given no less than any other coastal economic zone, and that there are good reasons based on our unique history and circumstances why our economic zone should be more expansive. It will take a few years of building strong relationships and fostering trust in Congress and the federal agencies to make those reasons understood, appreciated, and translated into a larger economic zone.

Juan T. Lizama
Papago, Saipan

Farewell to a friend

To the family of the Julian Manglona, our condolences. It's hard to believe that my friend and fellow cadet during the 11th Police Academy left without saying goodbye. During the time of our training, he was always helping me and saying that we need to do our duties once we completed our training. We always do exercise even if the training is done. I was surprised that he left. We will surely miss him a lot. May God bless him and the family.

Dexter Apatang
Rota

Business

Powder-laced letters sent to banks in 9 cities

WASHINGTON (AP)—More than 30 letters containing a suspicious powder were mailed to Chase bank branches and federal banking regulators' offices in nine cities, authorities said Tuesday in what was being investigated as a first, if extreme, public backlash over the nation's financial crisis.

Initial tests on the powder proved negative for poisonous or otherwise dangerous toxins, the FBI said. An FBI spokesman in Oklahoma, where eight letters turned up, said local preliminary assessments showed the powder was harmless calcium.

Additional tests were being run on the letters Tuesday as officials zeroed in on possible suspects near Amarillo, Texas, where the letters were postmarked.

"Most of these letters contain a powder substance with a threatening communication," the FBI said in a statement.

"Even sending a hoax letter is a serious crime," the FBI said.

A law enforcement official said the letters were mailed to Chase bank branches in or near Atlanta, Chicago, Columbus, Ohio, Dallas, Denver, Newark, N.J., New York City, Oklahoma City and Washington. They all appear to be from the same source and began showing up at the banks on Monday, according to the official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly.

A second law enforcement official, also speaking anonymously under the same conditions, said authorities were looking into whether the letters were sent in anger due to the cratering economy. Authorities would not release the text of the letters, but Gary Johnson, a spokesman at the FBI field office in Oklahoma City, said the threat was "based on past actions of the bank" and that the letters implied that the opener was going to die.

U.S. Postal inspector JoJan Henderson confirmed that the letters appeared to be related. The U.S. Postal Service and state and local officials also were investigating.

The letters were sent against a backdrop of eroding trust in U.S. financial institutions. The country is battling its worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, where borrowing money has become much more difficult and a lot more expensive for consumers and businesses. The situation has roiled Wall Street and threatens to plunge the U.S. economy into a deep recession.

One of the main goals of Washington policymakers is to restore confidence in the banking and financial system. To do so, the government has announced a flurry of drastic actions in recent weeks. The government is injecting billions into the country's biggest banks in return for partial ownership. It is also guaranteeing new bank debt and has boosted deposit insurance from $100,000 to $250,000.

The crisis has left home foreclosures at record highs, has shriveled Americans' nest eggs and has catapulted unemployment.

No injuries were reported after any of the letters were opened. Mary Jane Rogers, a spokeswoman for JPMorgan Chase & Co., said some employees, including a pregnant woman, were examined as a precaution.

Eight banks in the Denver area and eight in the Oklahoma City area received letters containing white powder, officials there said. All Denver branches reopened Tuesday.

Paulson predicts success in overcoming US crisis

WASHINGTON (AP)—Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson said Tuesday the current financial challenges facing the country will persist for a number of months, but he said the economy will rebound.

Paulson, speaking to an audience in New York, said that the recovery will occur because the administration, working with the Federal Reserve, is committed to taking the necessary steps to strength the financial system.

He said that close cooperation with other countries is critical and cautioned that it is important for all nations to be careful to make sure that the actions they are taking to deal with the crisis do not come at the expense of other nations.

"Our government will do what is necessary to significantly strengthen our banks and financial institutions, enabling them to increase financing for the consumption and business investments that drive U.S. economic growth," Paulson said in remarks to the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations. Copies of his remarks were released in Washington.

"Through a multitude of powerful actions we have and will demonstrate our commitment to unlocking our credit markets and minimizing the impact of the current instability on the rest of the U.S. economy," Paulson said.

"Although we expect current challenges to continue for a number of months, we will overcome them as we have overcome every challenge our nation has ever faced," Paulson said.

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PUBLIC NOTICE
October 21, 2008

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Board of Directors of the Commonwealth Development Authority thru its Acting Chairman, hereby informs the general public that the CDA Board of Directors will hold its regular meeting on Thursday, October 23, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the CDA Conference Room, Second Floor, Wakin's Building, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Saipan. The agenda for this meeting is as follows:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1. Roll Call
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Adoption of Minutes

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. REPORTS
1. Financial Report – CDA
2. Legal Counsel's Report

IV. DIVISIONS/COMMITTEES
1. Development Corporation Division (DCD)
2. DBD/Public Finance Committee
3. Admin. Matters/Personnel & Budget
4. QC Program/Economic Development Activities

V. OLD BUSINESS
1. Pacific Gardenia Hotel – Update
2. Sunset Villa – Update
3. Reconsideration of Previous Board Action on Rota Property

VI. NEW BUSINESS
1. Election of Officers
2. Reorganization

VII. OTHER MATTERS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session)

/s/ **PEDRO I. ITIBUS**
Acting Chairman, CDA Board of Directors

Nation

ILL ECONOMY WOULD LIMIT OPTIONS

Obama would offer discipline, ambitious agenda

By JENNIFER LOVEN
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

Editor's Note: One in a pair of stories on John McCain and Barack Obama exploring how the next president would govern.

WASHINGTON (AP)—For all Barack Obama's talk about change, there are signs that in style—if not substance—a new White House under Democrat Obama would operate much like the current one under President George W. Bush.

Think discipline, efficiency and secrecy. These are hallmarks of Obama's campaign, just as they have been for the last eight years in the leak-proof, tightly managed Bush administration.

If Obama becomes the nation's 44th president, however, the extraordinary history-making aspects of his ascension could for a time overshadow almost everything else.

The nation would have its first black leader, one of its youngest presidents ever and someone with a varied, even exotic, background. The book on the United States' checkered history of race relations would add a new chapter. And even if Obama's honeymoon was short-lived, the world would see America in a new light.

There are other ways, small and large, that an Obama White House promises to usher in newness.

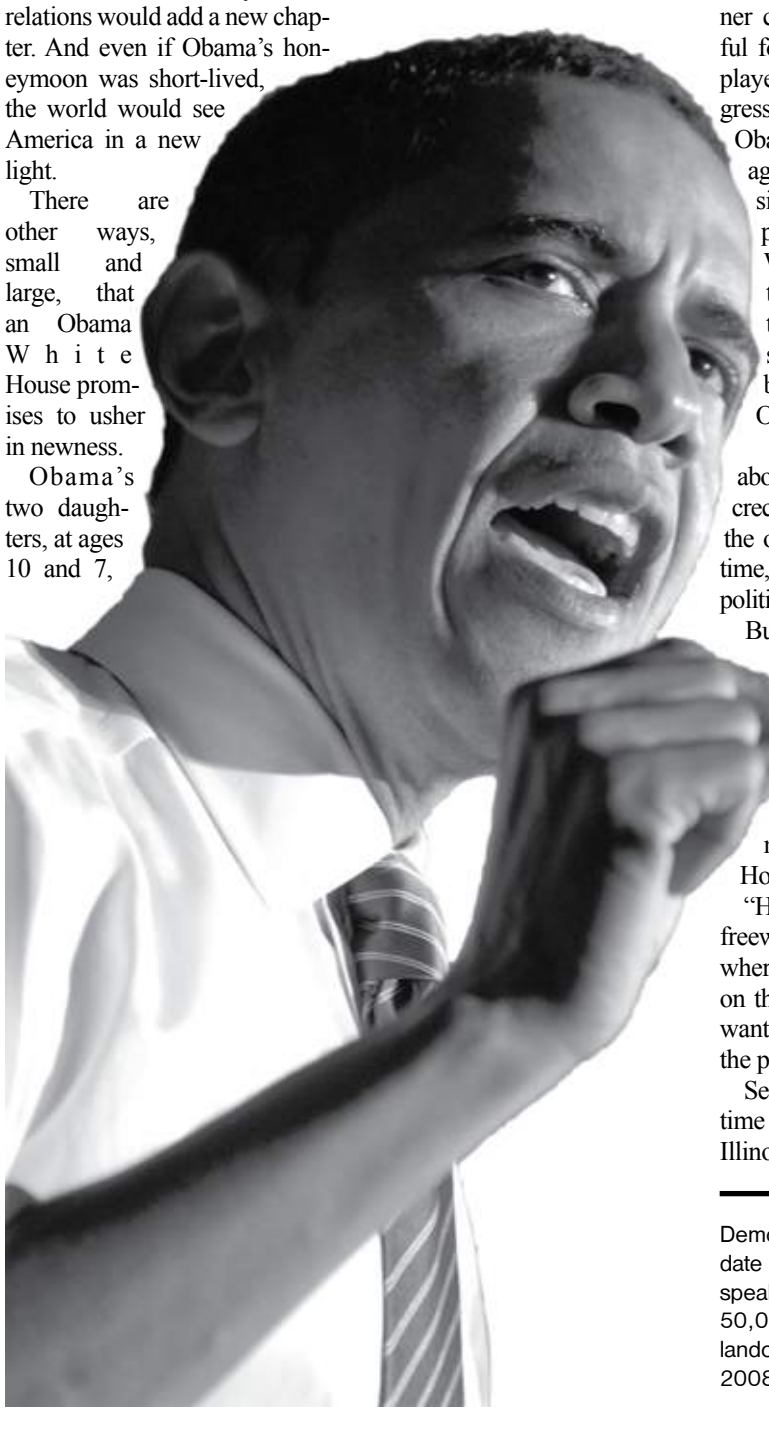
Obama's two daughters, at ages 10 and 7, would be the youngest residents to roam the White House since 9-year-old Amy Carter tagged along with President Jimmy Carter and his wife in 1977. Obama's poise at the podium would end an era of water-cooler jokes about presidential malapropisms.

On issues, Obama's approach on everything from Iraq to health care would look much different from the last eight years. He has pledged to preside over an unconventional style of politics and policy development virtually blind to party, an intriguing possibility even if hard to trust after years of divisive partisanship.

Circumstances often spring game-changing surprises on a new president. But how candidate Obama has managed his campaign, and what he's promised along the way, offer hints of how a President Obama would govern.

Obama, like Bush, demands an orderly shop.

Aides are expected to be both tightlipped and tight-knit. They get a "no drama" speech upon hire. And even if that rule is violated, histrionic disagreements over strategy, policy or personality are expected to stay behind closed doors, and they actually do. Most events come off like clockwork.



Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., speaks to a crowd of more than 50,000 people at a rally in Orlando, Fla., Monday, Oct. 20, 2008. AP

Obama's style as a candidate predicts a chief executive officer-style president, one who delegates rather than micromanages.

ANALYSIS

It's the same model as for Bush, the nation's first president with a masters in business administration. It derives in part from something the two men have in common: natural political gifts that set them on a path to the White House that took shortcuts around much government experience. That means policy experts are needed for heavy lifting.

The 47-year-old Obama hasn't finished his first term in the U.S. Senate, and before that had just eight years as a state lawmaker under his government belt.

Obama, like Bush, relies most on a small, hard-to-penetrate inner circle. It's been a successful formula, but can irk power players in his party and in Congress, who sometimes see Team Obama as too insular. This image was only fed by the decision to place Obama's campaign headquarters far from Washington in Chicago and the way his campaign used the Internet and grass-roots supporters, more than party bosses, to capitalize on the Obama phenomenon.

Obama's discipline is less about the importance of secrecy and more about making the organizational trains run on time, said Princeton University political historian Julian Zelizer.

Bush and Obama stand for very different things, says Zelizer, but Obama "runs his campaign with the same sort of methodical efficiency and closed nature of the Bush White House."

"He's not going to have a freewheeling White House where people are free to go out on their own and do what they want and be allowed to talk to the press," Zelizer said.

Sen. Dick Durbin, a longtime Obama friend and fellow Illinois Democrat, says Obama created a tight ship in part by being willing to hear things he doesn't like from aides, and by not ripping into them when mistakes were made. "There were setbacks, but there was no bloodletting," he said.

Obama is known for his loyalty, as well as for preferring aides who keep their mind on the work and the attention on the boss. Know much about David Plouffe or Valerie Jarrett or Pete Rouse or Steve Hildebrand or Robert Gibbs or David Axelrod? These campaign masterminds could well soon have offices in the White House, but none has become a celebrity aide in the mold of Bill Clinton's James Carville or Bush's Karl Rove.

Obama's own style combines cool-to-the-point-of-detached bearing with cerebral decision-making and natural charisma.

His Republican rival, John McCain, casts Obama as indecisive, inexperienced, and aloof—a celebrity empty suit. Obama's camp counters that he is a leader who thinks first, decides later and remains calm in a crisis.

Regardless, Zelizer said, Obama will need to guard against abandoning his natural caution to launch a spree of legislative action right off the bat. Going too far to please Democrats excited about finally being in control again of both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue could risk a backlash from the public, he said.

With all the attention that is paid to a president's first 100 days in office, candidates themselves often divide their proposals between those with get-it-done-now status and those that will have to wait.

One issue that won't wait even until Inauguration Day is the battered economy.

Obama supports immediate action, in a special post-election congressional session, to spend billions on new economic stimulus measures. His ideas: a moratorium on home foreclosures, tax breaks for job creation and small-business investment, penalty-free withdrawals from retirement accounts, an unemployment benefits extension, support for state and local governments, money for infrastructure construction, and doubled loan guarantees for automakers.

Beyond that, Obama has defined three big issues for the first 100 days of his presidency: working to bring combat troops home from Iraq in a little over a year, beginning a plan to achieve universal health care coverage, and getting started on a far-reaching energy plan.

During 20 months of campaigning, he also has promised that many other things will gain his immediate attention, among them: immigration reform; a strict ethics code; a review of Bush's executive orders, particularly those dealing with warrantless wiretaps, the prison at the Guantanamo Bay Navy base, and interrogation techniques; and a rural policy summit in Iowa with accompanying legislative proposals to Congress.

With an economic emergency at hand, many may have to be postponed.

But for a man whose candidacy got rocket fuel from his opposition to the decision to go into Iraq, the one promise Obama cannot afford to put off is the one to end the war. Obama has promised that ending the war would be a priority not for his first 100 days in office—but for his very first. The Joint Chiefs of Staff will find themselves in the Oval Office on Jan. 21, he says, being handed a new mission from their commander in chief "to end this war, responsibly and deliberately, but decisively."

In all these things, Obama has reached big. That means he would need to spend a fair amount of time early on building bridges to Capitol Hill. Working with a Congress controlled by his own party doesn't guarantee he'd easily get what he wants.

To marshal public support for his agenda, he'll need to draw on his vaunted oratorical skills.

His speeches may be as measured as his "No Drama Obama" demeanor. But with subtle shifts in volume and pacing, Obama can move an audience to thunderous ovation or hushed attention. That's a potent tool, in governing as well as politics.

"The smart thing to do," Zelizer said, "would be to keep that up."

CAMPAIGN PROMISES

CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY

ENERGY

MCCAIN: Advocates increased offshore drilling, and building 45 nuclear power reactors by 2030. Seeks mandatory reductions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases by 60 percent from 1990 levels by 2050, using a market-based cap-and-trade system the would increase energy costs. Supports $2 billion program to develop carbon capture and other clean coal research and development. $5,000 tax credit for the purchase of zero carbon emission cars; $300 million prize for improved batteries for hybrid vehicles.

OBAMA: Proposes emergency cost-fighting measures such as a windfall-profits tax on largest oil companies to pay for energy rebates of up to $1,000 per couple and the release of up to 70 million barrels of oil from Strategic Petroleum Reserve to boost supplies. Ten-year, $150 billion fund to encourage biofuels, wind, solar, plug-in hybrids, clean-coal technology and other "climate-friendly" alternative supplies, with financing to come from selling pollution allowances in a market-based, cap-and-trade system. Aims for mandatory reductions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent from 1990 levels by 2050. Supports increasing federal fuel economy requirements from 35 mpg to 40 mpg. Now would consider limited expansion of offshore oil and gas drilling, but opposes drilling in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

HEALTH CARE

MCCAIN: Promises $2,500 refundable tax credit for individuals, $5,000 for families, to make health insurance more affordable. No mandate for universal coverage. Would no longer shield from income taxes those payments that businesses and their workers make toward employer-sponsored health insurance. Would let people buy health plans offered by insurers located in other states.

OBAMA: Proposes mandatory coverage for children, no mandate for adults. Aims for universal coverage by requiring larger employers to share costs of insuring workers and by offering coverage similar to that in plan for federal employees. Proposes spending $50 billion on information technology over five years to reduce health care costs over time.

EDUCATION

MCCAIN: Proposes more money for community college education. Advocates expansion of District of Columbia's voucher program, but not a federal voucher program as he did in 2000. Sees No Child Left Behind law as vehicle for increasing opportunities for parents to choose school.

OBAMA: Proposes encouraging, but not mandating, universal pre-kindergarten; teacher pay raises tied to, although not based solely on, test scores; an overhaul of No Child Left Behind law to better measure student progress, make room for subjects like music and art, and be less punitive toward failing schools; and a tax credit to pay up to $4,000 of college costs for students who perform 100 hours of community service a year.

TAXES

MCCAIN: Proposes extending all of President Bush's tax cuts and cutting corporate tax rate to 25 percent. After initially pledging not to raise taxes, now says nothing can be ruled out in negotiating compromises to keep Social Security solvent.

OBAMA: Promises immediate tax cuts for households making under $250,000, and increased taxes on families making over $250,000, as well as on corporations and capital gains. Promises to create new tax breaks for lower-income families, including tripling Earned Income Tax Credit for minimum-wage workers, giving larger families a higher credit, and eliminating the tax-filing requirement for older workers making under $50,000. Also calls for tax incentives for savings, child care and mortgage expenses. ***(The Associated Press)***

Nation

McCain reminds Biden he's been tested in crisis

AMERICA VOTES

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP)—Republican John McCain told voters in this key electoral state Tuesday he was personally tested by the same kind of crisis that Democratic vice presidential nominee Joseph Biden warned Barack Obama will almost certainly face if elected president.

McCain

McCain recalled being ready to launch a bombing run during the October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, which Biden said over the weekend tested a new President John F. Kennedy and was the template for the kind of "generated crisis" the 47-year-old Obama would face within six months of taking office.

"I was on board the USS *Enterprise*," McCain, a former naval aviator, said in the capital city of Harrisburg. "I sat in the cockpit, on the flight deck of the USS *Enterprise*, off of Cuba. I had a target. My friends, you know how close we came to a nuclear war."

As the crowd of several thousand began to swell with cheers and applause, he added with dramatic effect: "America will not have a president who needs to be tested. I've been tested, my friends."

Biden told two fundraising audiences in Seattle over the weekend that he expected world figures to test Obama early if he wins the election in two weeks.

"He's gonna need you—not financially to help him—we're gonna need you to use your influence, your influence within the community, to stand with him," Biden said.

Biden predicted Obama would fare well because he's "got steel in his spine." In citing the Cuban Missile Crisis, though, he evoked a historic event in which McCain played a part.

"The *Enterprise*, sailing at full speed under nuclear power, was the first U.S. carrier to reach waters off Cuba," McCain wrote in his memoir, "Faith of My Fathers." "For about five days, the pilots on the *Enterprise* believed we were going into action. We had never been in combat before, and despite the global confrontation a strike on Cuba portended, we were prepared and anxious to fly our first mission."

He added: "Pilots and crewmen alike adopted a cool-headed, business-as-usual attitude toward the mission. Inwardly, of course, we were excited as hell, but we kept our composure and aped the standard image of a laconic, reserved, and fearless American at war."

Mongols motorcycle gang arrested in federal sweep

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Dozens of burly, tattoo-covered members of the Mongol motorcycle gang were arrested Tuesday by federal agents in six states following a three-year investigation in which undercover agents infiltrated the group.

More than 60 members of the Southern California-based Mongol Motorcycle Club were arrested under a federal racketeering indictment that included charges of murder, attempted murder, assault, as well as gun and drug violations, said Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives spokesman Mike Hoffman.

During some arrests, sharpshooters stood guard on surrounding rooftops as motorcycles were lined up and confiscated.

"It's going to be a large hit to their organization. We are arresting many of their top members," Hoffman said.

U.S. Attorney Thomas O'Brien said he believed it to be the highest number of arrests of a motorcycle gang in the nation's history.

His staff planned to ask a judge for an injunction to seize the Mongols' trademarked name, a first for federal authorities. If the order is approved, no member would be able to wear a jacket or ride a bike bearing the gang's name.

"It would allow law enforcement to seize the leather jackets right off their back," O'Brien said.

AP

Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca, at podium, speaks during a news conference Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2008, in Los Angeles.

AP *investigation says Alaska funded travel of* Palin's *kids*

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—Gov. Sarah Palin charged the state for her children to travel with her, including to events where they were not invited, and later amended expense reports to specify that they were on official business.

The charges included costs for hotel and commercial flights for three daughters to join Palin to watch their father in a snowmobile race, and a trip to New York, where the governor attended a five-hour conference and stayed with 17-year-old Bristol for five days and four nights in a luxury hotel.

In all, Palin has charged the state $21,012 for her three daughters' 64 one-way and 12 round-trip commercial flights since she took office in December 2006. In some other cases, she has charged the state for hotel rooms for the girls.

Alaska law does not specifically address expenses for a governor's children. The law allows for payment of expenses for anyone conducting official state business.

As governor, Palin justified having the state pay for the travel of her daughters—Bristol, 17; Willow, 14; and Piper, 7—by noting on travel forms that the girls had been invited to attend or participate in events on the governor's schedule.

But some organizers of these events said they were surprised when the Palin children showed up uninvited, or said they agreed to a request by the governor to allow the children to attend.

Several other organizers said the children merely accompanied their mother and did not participate. The trips enabled Palin, whose main state office is in the capital of Juneau, to spend more time with her children.

"She said any event she can take her kids to is an event she tries to attend," said Jennifer McCarthy, who helped organize the June 2007 Family Day Celebration picnic in Ketchikan that Piper attended with her parents.

State Finance Director Kim Garnero told The Associated Press she has not reviewed the Palins' travel expense forms, so she could not say whether the daughters' travel with their mother would meet the definition of official business.

On Aug. 6, three weeks before Republican presidential nominee Sen. John McCain chose Palin his running mate, and after Alaska reporters asked for the records, Palin ordered changes to previously filed expense reports for her daughters' travel.

'Walter Reed' for combat dogs opens at Texas base

SAN ANTONIO (AP)—A new $15 million veterinary hospital for four-legged military personnel opened Tuesday at Lackland Air Force Base, offering a long overdue facility that gives advanced medical treatment for combat-wounded dogs.

Dogs working for all branches of the military and the Transportation Safety Administration are trained at the base to find explosive devices, drugs and land mines. Some 2,500 dogs are working with military units.

Like soldiers and Marines in combat, military dogs suffer from war wounds and routine health issues that need to be treated to ensure they can continue working.

Dogs injured in Iraq or Afghanistan get emergency medical treatment on the battlefield and are flown to Germany for care. If necessary, they'll fly on to San Antonio for more advanced treatment - much like wounded human personnel.

"We act as the Walter Reed of the veterinary world," said Army Col. Bob Vogelsang, hospital director, referring to the Washington military medical center that treats troops returning severely wounded from Iraq and Afghanistan.

The dogs can usually return to combat areas if they recover at the Military Working Dog Center, he said.

Before the center opened, veterinarians treated and rehabilitated dogs in a cramped building that opened in 1968, when the military trained dogs for work in Vietnam.

The hospital was already overloaded by Sept. 11, 2001, but since then, demand for military working dogs has jumped dramatically. They're so short on dog breeds such as German shepherds, Labrador retrievers and Belgian Malinoises that Lackland officials have begun breeding puppies at the base.

ACROSS THE NATION

San Francisco weighs decriminalizing prostitution

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—In this live-and-let-live town, where medical marijuana clubs do business next to grocery stores and an annual fair celebrates sadomasochism, prostitutes could soon walk the streets without fear of arrest. San Francisco would become the first major U.S. city to decriminalize prostitution if voters next month approve Proposition K—a measure that forbids local authorities from investigating, arresting or prosecuting anyone for selling sex. The ballot question technically would not legalize prostitution since state law still prohibits it, but the measure would eliminate the power of local law enforcement officials to go after prostitutes. Proponents say the measure will free up $11 million the police spend each year arresting prostitutes and allow them to form collectives. "It will allow workers to organize for our rights and for our safety," said Patricia West, 22, who said she has been selling sex for about a year by placing ads on the Internet. She moved to San Francisco in May from Texas to work on Proposition K.

FEMA disputes formaldehyde study of Iowa trailers

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP)—The Federal Emergency Management Agency on Tuesday questioned a TV station's findings of high formaldehyde levels in agency-issued trailers and said the lifestyles and habits of the flood victims living in the trailers may be to blame. Government tests have shown high formaldehyde levels in FEMA trailers and mobile homes sent to Gulf Coast hurricane victims starting in 2005, and a judge recently cited evidence that FEMA delayed an investigation into complaints about the homes there. KGAN-TV contracted with a chemical testing company to test 20 trailers in Cedar Rapids occupied by people displaced by June flooding. In a report that aired Monday, the station said all 20 trailers exceeded FEMA's standard for the preservative, which can cause breathing problems and is classified as a carcinogen. In a conference call with reporters, three FEMA officials questioned KGAN's testing methods and the validity of the findings.

Asia

India launches moon mission

AP

In this undated photo provided by the Indian Space Research Organization, Chandrayaan-1, India's maiden lunar mission, is taken to the launch pad in this undated photo at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, about 100 kilometers (63 miles) north of Chennai, India.

NEW DELHI (AP)—Scientists have better maps of distant Mars than the moon where astronauts have walked. But India hopes to change that with its first lunar mission.

Chandrayaan-1—which means "Moon Craft" in ancient Sanskrit—launched from the Sriharikota space center in southern India early Wednesday morning in a two-year mission aimed at laying the groundwork for further Indian space expeditions.

Scientists, clapping and cheering, tracked the ascent on computer screens as they lost sight of the rocket in heavy clouds.

"This is a historic moment for India," Indian Space Research Organization chairman G. Madhavan Nair said.

"We have started our journey to the moon and the first leg has gone perfectly well," he said, adding that they hoped to "unravel the mystery of the moon."

Chief among the mission's goals is mapping not only the surface of the moon, but what lies beneath. India joined what's shaping up as a 21st century space race with Chinese and Japanese crafts already in orbit around the moon.

The United States, which won the 1960s race to send men to the moon, won't jump in this race with its new lunar probe until next spring, but it is providing key mapping equipment for India's mission.

As India's economy has boomed in recent years, it has sought to convert its new found wealth—built on its high-tech sector—into political and military clout and stake a claim as a world leader. It is hoping that a moon mission—coming just months after it finalized a deal with the United States that recognizes India as a nuclear power—will further enhance that status.

"It is a remarkable technological achievement for the country," said S. Satish, a spokesman for the Indian Space Research Organization, which plans to use the 3,080-pound lunar probe to create a high-resolution map of the lunar surface and what minerals are below. Two of the mapping instruments are a joint project with NASA.

China releases terror blacklist in Olympic plot

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese police called Tuesday for the extradition of eight alleged separatists accused of plotting a campaign of terror to coincide with the Beijing Olympics—a scheme that reportedly included bomb attacks within China and in unspecified countries in the Middle East and South Asia.

A Public Security Ministry spokesman said the eight men, all Chinese citizens, were believed to have financed, incited and organized attacks during and around the Aug. 8-24 games as part of an ongoing insurgency against Chinese rule in the traditionally Muslim west.

Wu Heping told reporters at a news briefing that the men were members of the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, a murky collection of extremists believed to be based across the border in lawless areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The eight "seriously threatened the security of the Beijing Olympic Games and China's social stability, while at the same time composing a threat to the security and stability of relevant countries and the region," Wu said.

Wu did not say in what country the men were suspected of hiding and left the briefing without taking questions.

He said one of the men planned to bomb a supermarket popular with Chinese business people in an unspecified Middle Eastern country ahead of the opening of the Olympic Games.

Former Thai premier found guilty of corruption

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—A Thai court found former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra guilty of corruption and sentenced him Tuesday to two years in prison, adding a new twist to the country's paralyzing political crisis.

The guilty verdict was the first against the country's former leader since he was ousted by a 2006 military coup after being accused of corruption and abuse of power.

Thaksin, 59, jumped bail and fled to England two months ago along with his wife, Pojaman, 51, who was also charged. The Supreme Court acquitted her on Tuesday.

From his home near London, Thaksin condemned the conviction but said it was hardly a surprise.

"It was politically motivated since the court is a carry-forward of the coup d'etat," Thaksin told The Associated Press. "I'm a politician and after I was toppled by the coup, it's normal that they will try every means to justify it."

The ruling was greeted with excitement by the political movement trying to force out the current government, which they accuse of being controlled by Thaksin.

Raucous cheers erupted among several thousand members of the People's Alliance for Democracy, which has occupied the grounds of the prime minister's offices since August. They chanted, "Go to jail, go to jail!"

World

'Change Iraq-US security pact'

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraq's Cabinet decided Tuesday to ask the U.S. for changes to the draft agreement that would keep American troops here three more years, as key Shiite lawmakers warned the deal stands little chance of approval as it stands.

The decision, reached in a closed-door meeting that lasted nearly six hours, raised doubt that the agreement can be ratified before a new American president is elected next month.

Parliament must approve the draft before the current U.N. mandate expires on Dec. 31 or no legal basis will exist for the U.S.-led military mission.

Such an outcome would force hard decisions in Baghdad and Washington on the future of the unpopular war.

Critics maintain the draft falls short of Iraqi demands for full control of their own country after nearly six years of U.S. occupation. Supporters insist Iraq still needs U.S. military and political support as it builds its security forces and governmental institutions.

Opposition, however, is divided, with different parties objecting to different parts of the agreement, which could make it difficult to win broad support for the entire document before the year end deadline.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and his ministers reviewed details of the draft, hammered out in months of tortuous negotiations, and concluded that changes were needed "to raise the agreement to a nationally acceptable level," government spokesman Ali al-Dabbagh said in a statement.

Cabinet members will prepare a list of proposed changes to present to the Americans, al-Dabbagh said without giving a timeframe.

Government officials said al-Maliki wanted the proposed changes submitted Wednesday so the full Cabinet could consider them Sunday. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not supposed to release the information.

The officials said the ministers of planning, defense and interior - which rely heavily on U.S. support - agreed to accept the draft without any changes. Others in the 37-member Cabinet raised various objections to the draft.

There was no immediate comment from the U.S. Embassy and no indication whether the U.S. would agree to further changes.

Russia, Iran and Qatar discuss forming gas cartel

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Russia, Iran and Qatar made the first serious moves Tuesday toward forming an OPEC-style cartel on natural gas, raising concerns that Moscow could boost its influence over energy markets spanning from Europe to South Asia.

Such an alliance would have little direct impact on the United States, which imports virtually no natural gas from Russia or the other nations.

But Washington and Western allies worry that closer strategic ties between Russia and Iran could hinder efforts to isolate Tehran over its nuclear ambitions. In addition, the United States opposes a proposed Iranian gas pipeline to Pakistan and India, key allies.

In Europe—which counts on Russia for nearly half of its natural gas imports—any cartel controlled by Moscow poses a threat to supply and pricing.

Russia, which most recently came into confrontation with the West over its five-day war with Georgia in August, has been accused of using its hold on energy supplies to bully its neighbors, particularly Ukraine.

Moscow cut natural gas exports to the former Soviet republic over a price dispute during the dead of winter in 2006 - a cutoff that caused disruptions to European nations further down the pipeline.

The 27-nation European Union expressed strong opposition to any natural gas cartel Tuesday, with an EU spokesman, Ferran Tarradellas Espuny, saying: "The European Commission feels that energy supplies have to be sold in a free market."

Together Russia, Qatar and Iran account for nearly a third of world natural gas exports—the vast majority supplied by Russia—according to U.S. government statistics. The three hold some 60 percent of world gas reserves, according to Russia's state-controlled energy company Gazprom.

WORLD BRIEFS

Afghan journalism student sentenced to 20 years

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—An Afghan appeals court overturned a death sentence Tuesday for a journalism student accused of blasphemy for asking questions in class about women's rights under Islam. But the judges still sentenced him to 20 years in prison. The case against 24-year-old Parwez Kambakhsh, whose brother has angered Afghan warlords with his own writings, has come to symbolize Afghanistan's slide toward an ultraconservative view on religious and individual freedoms. "I don't accept the court's decision," Kambakhsh told The Associated Press as he was leaving the courtroom. "It is an unfair decision." The case can be appealed to the Supreme Court, the highest court in Afghanistan. John Dempsey, a U.S. lawyer working for six years to reform the Afghan justice system, said Kambakhsh has yet to get a fair trial.

US, Russia hold fence-mending military talks

HELSINKI, Finland (AP)—The top U.S. military officer held "businesslike" talks on Georgia, Afghanistan and missile defense with his Russian counterpart Tuesday, a signal of thawing relations between the two powers. Held at an isolated manor house in Finland, it was the highest-level military meeting between the two countries since Russia's war with U.S. ally Georgia in August. The conflict strained already tense ties between Washington and Moscow. Adm. Michael G. Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Russian Gen. Nikolai Makarov "discussed a wide range of issues, including the future of NATO and the current status of missile defense systems in Europe," said Kim Hargan, a spokesman for the U.S. Embassy in Finland. Mullen later called U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, saying they had a "productive, businesslike conversation," Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell said in Washington, adding that Gates was pleased with the outcome.

Somalis free hijacked Indian dhow with 13 crew

MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP)—Somali gunmen acting as freelance coast guards freed a hijacked Indian dhow and its 13 crew members after a battle with pirates off the country's northern coast, a Somali official said Tuesday. Four of the pirates were captured during the shootout while another four escaped, said Ali Abdi Aware, the foreign minister of Somalia's semiautonomous region of Puntland. None of the dhow's crew was wounded Somalia does not have a formal coast guard, but groups of heavily armed clan-based militias sometimes do the job for local authorities. The cargo-laden vessel was en route to Somalia from Asia when it was seized over the weekend, said Noel Choong, head of the International Maritime Bureau's piracy reporting center in Kuala Lumpur. The attack came despite increased international cooperation to crack down on pirates in Somali waters.

Environment

The killer brown tree snake

By HARRISON SMITH
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Editor's Note: The following essay was submitted by the author as a report for the English class of Ms. Tuten-Puckett at the Saipan International School.

Smith

Sliding along the tree branches is the killer brown tree snake (or BTS for short). This snake has almost no predators in the CNMI. The snake can be almost impossible to see. It blends into trees like a shadow in the night. The BTS is nocturnal and lives in caves or trees. The snakes eat puppies, birds, chickens, lizards, and trash. They haven't taken over the CNMI yet but might be slowly reproducing.

To control the snake population, the Division of Fish and Wildlife are using as many ways as they can. One way to control the BTS is to hang traps around docks, airports, and areas where there have been credible sightings. The trap is a wire cylinder that has two holes on each side with a mouse in the middle. When the snake tries to get the mouse they get trapped. Fish and Wildlife checks the cages each week for snakes.

There are also dogs that can sniff out snakes. The dogs sniff out cargo and other things around for snakes. The dogs only work well in the morning and evening. In the afternoon the smell of the snake disappears.

There are barriers at the docks and airports to trap snakes. The barriers are closed-in areas the have ledges hanging inward. They put cargo inside so if a snake tries to escape it can't climb over the wall. Then in the morning the dogs can go in and sniff out the snakes. If there is none then they move out the cargo.

There are many reasons to control the BTS. The snakes eat everything they can, so they eat birds. When a bird becomes endangered it is bad not only for the ecosystem but it is bad for development. If an endangered bird, or species for that matter, lives on a piece of property you own you might not be able to build on it. You would ether have to buy another piece of land for the bird to live, avoid the bird's home, or not build at all. If all the birds become endangered it will be very hard on development.

Brown tree snakes also climb telephone poles and can cause a power outage. That outage can even be island-wide. In takes 3-4 hours to fix such an incident. In the Guam's hospital, one out of 1,000 patients are in there because of a brown tree snake bite. Many of these people are babies and small children.

To help fight brown tree snakes, you need to know more about them. If you see a snake, call 28-SNAKE. Don't startle the snake, or you will never see it again. Slowly follow it or if your 100 percent sure that you can kill it, then kill it. Learn more ways to fight brown tree snakes by doing research or calling DFW at 664-6014.

ABIGAIL HUDKINS/8TH GRADE
Nate Hawley conducts a brown tree snake presentation to SIS students.

Priority watersheds for Tinian

The Micronesia Challenge benthic team has identified the Puntan Daiplo-Lamanibot and the Puntan Tahgong as priority watersheds.

The Puntan Daiplo-Lamanibot watershed includes the San Jose village leading to the Taga Beach area. The Puntan Tahgong watershed includes Unai Babui and Unai Chulu.

The goals for these sites are to first identify the types and quantities of the contaminants, and the ecological consequences. The restoration options for the two watersheds will then be determined.

Threats to these watersheds are similar to those on Saipan and Rota. There are some farming and grazing, with minimal erosion control.

"There appears to be extremely fast percolation through the karst aquifer, facilitating the rapid transport of nutrients from these watersheds," said Peter Houk, DEQ biologist.

Houk said the reefs in the watershed sites are well developed; they are high in coral cover, richness and diversity. However, negative trends over the past eight years indicate an impact from land-based pollution in the sites.

The watershed sites are also home to Tinian monarch; green sea turtle Micronesian megapdode, Marianas fruit bat, and hawksbill turtle.

The Micronesia Challenge is a commitment by the Chief Executives of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, theRepublic of Palau, the U.S. Territory of Guam and the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to effectively conserve at least 30 percent of the near-shore marine resources and 20 percent of the terrestrial resources across Micronesia by 2020. ***(CoCo)***

We want your fish photos!

Do you have great photos of the CNMI's spectacular fish? Would you like them to be featured in the 2009 Fish of the CNMI Calendar? If so please submit your digital photo to: pridecnmi@gmail.com. Or, contact Brooke Nevitt, Education and Outreach Coordinator, Coastal Resources Management Office 664-8320.

Be sure to include your name, the fish photographed, and where the photo was taken.

Selected photographs will be featured in the calendar and recognition will be given to photographers.

We look forward to seeing your contributions! ***(CoCo)***

Un Dangkulo Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase

To our many relatives and friends who came to share this very special moment with us as we said our farewell to our dearly beloved husband and father,

Juan Borja King

FEBRUARY 28, 1928 — OCTOBER 9, 2008

Your words of wisdom, encouragement, support, and unconditional love during this very difficult time have shown us the light to hold dearly and to live on with loving memories of our dearly beloved. In our hearts, we will feel that emptiness which we all treasured immensely, a father's love and presence always, but we are strengthened with the belief that he is resting peacefully with God.

We are forever grateful to you and shall always keep you close to our hearts. We offer our prayers in thanksgiving to you, and we humbly ask that as you pray, you will remember him, too.

To our relatives and friends, we can't thank you enough for caring for our father, making him laugh and being there for him when it counted the most.

Immediate family and close friends are invited to join Lucy, their daughters, Janet and Lisa; and Juan & Lucy's godson, Jesse M. Pangelinan; to the final *lisayun guma'* Sunday, October 26, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. at Juan & Lucy's residence in San Jose Village, Tinian.

Ginen I Familia

Life & Style

Britney Spears' driver's license case dismissed

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Britney Spears has a license to go free. Jurors remained deadlocked 10-2 on whether she was guilty of driving without a valid California license Tuesday. A mistrial was declared, prosecutors said they wouldn't pursue the matter further - and Spears was spared a criminal record when the judge ultimately dismissed the case.

Ten of the 12 jurors favored outright acquittal for Spears, who never appeared in court. Her attorney, J. Michael Flanagan, declared victory and criticized prosecutors for bringing a "fix-it ticket" to trial because his client is famous.

But Los Angeles Deputy City Attorney Michael Amerian said blame for the case getting this far belonged to Spears, who rejected two plea deals - one that included probation and another that would require her to pay a $1,000 fine. Flanagan has said Spears fought the charge to keep her record clean.

The jury's deadlock could not be broken Tuesday, even after Los Angeles Superior Court Judge James Steele permitted attorneys to make additional closing arguments in the morning. The jury struggled with the case since resuming deliberations Monday, telling a judge they couldn't reach an unanimous decision after five votes going back to Friday.

Steele thanked jurors for their time and dismissed them, and prosecutors told him a couple of hours later that they were dropping the matter, prompting him to dismiss the case.

Gary Moy, the jury's foreman, said Tuesday afternoon that he thought prosecutors did enough to convict Spears, but that the majority of his fellow jurors could not be swayed and thought the case was a waste of time. Moy added that he believed some jurors favored Spears because of her fame.

Amerian said the result was another example of the challenge of trying the famous in Tinseltown.

"It just goes to show, I think, how difficult it is to convict any celebrity of a crime here in Los Angeles," Amerian said. "For whatever reason, jurors are reluctant to do that and I think history shows that."

But Flanagan said Spears fame drove the case to trial, and that she should have been allowed to pay a small fine rather than face the maximum penalty of six months in jail and a $1,000 fine.

Deliberations lasted longer than the case, which featured only three witnesses and roughly a day's worth of testimony and arguments. The defense had argued that Spears didn't meet the state's residency requirements, and that her Louisiana license was all she needed to drive legally.

Jurors posed a pair of questions Monday before declaring themselves deadlocked: One sought to clarify the charges against Spears, and whether she should be considered guilty if she possessed a valid Louisiana license.

The other: "Why was she stopped in the first place?" In fact, there was no traffic stop that precipitated the case; she was cited later, after video of the accident surfaced.

AP

In this Sept. 7, 2008, file photo, Britney Spears poses with her awards backstage at the 2008 MTV Video Music Awards in Los Angeles.

Attorneys on both sides agreed that Spears was behind the wheel in August 2007 when she hit a parked car. That kept jurors from hearing any mention of the hit-and-run - or any narrative elements to explain why she faced a criminal charge

Amerian initially put up only one witness and entered one piece of evidence during the trial, showing that Spears did not have a valid California license more than a week after the accident.

In all, only three witnesses testified. After Flanagan called Spears' father to the stand, Amerian introduced signed papers from the singer's divorce that indicated she had been a California resident since at least 2006.

Amerian said he thought he did enough to prove the case, but that pursuing it further wouldn't be "prudent."

'Die Hard' director can change plea

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—"Die Hard" director John McTiernan will have a chance to withdraw his guilty plea in a Hollywood wiretapping case that got him sentenced to four months in federal prison.

On Tuesday, the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco ordered a new hearing on McTiernan's motion, which a judge rejected last year.

McTiernan, who's free on bail, pleaded guilty to charges of lying to the FBI about his association with disgraced private eye Anthony Pellicano.

Pellicano was convicted of bugging phones of celebrities and others to get information for his clients.

McTiernan, who's admitted he paid Pellicano to conduct an illegal wiretap, argued he had inadequate legal representation when he made the plea.

Toni Braxton booted from 'Dancing with the Stars'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Toni Braxton will no longer break it down on "Dancing with the Stars."

The singer and her professional partner, Alec Mazo, were eliminated Tuesday from ABC's popular dancing competition. The pair received a score of 22 out of 30 from the show's judges during Monday's performance after a respectable West Coast swing routine. The "Unbreak My Heart" crooner was booted after that score was combined with viewer votes.

"My goal was reached," said Braxton, who has coronary microvascular angina, after she was dismissed. "I wanted to do better. I wanted to breathe better. And I was definitely breathing better. I've come a long way from Week One to Week Now."

Celebrities remaining in the competition include TV personality Brooke Burke; singer Lance Bass; former NFL star Warren Sapp; Olympic gold medalist Maurice Greene; actor Cody Linley; and actresses Cloris Leachman and Susan Lucci. Chef Rocco DiSpirito, reality TV star Kim Kardashian, actor Ted McGinley and comedian Jeffrey Ross were previously eliminated.

AP

In this image released by ABC, Toni Braxton and her dance partner Alec Mazo perform on "Dancing With The Stars," on Monday, Oct. 13, 2008 in Los Angeles.

Billionaire attempts trans-Atlantic sailing record

NEW YORK (AP)—British billionaire Sir Richard Branson's latest adventure is a family affair.

Two of Branson's children plan to join the 58-year-old chairman of the Virgin Group and a crew of champion sailors early Wednesday in an attempt to break the record for a trans-Atlantic crossing in a single-hulled sailboat.

The current record is 6 days, 17 hours, 52 minutes and 39 seconds.

Branson and his crew will sail in a 99-foot (30-meter)super maxi race yacht. Joining Branson is his 23-year-old son Sam and 26-year-old daughter Holly.

They plan to set out from Ambrose Light in New York Bay on their way to Lizard Point off the coast of southwest England. Their journey will stretch 3,000 miles (4,828 kilometers) through the frigid North Atlantic, where the crew may need to dodge icebergs.

Julianne Hough hospitalized after 'Dancing'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Julianne Hough took a trip to the hospital after "Dancing with the Stars" with stomach trouble.

The 20-year-old professional dancer, who's partnered with "Hannah Montana" actor Cody Linely on the popular ABC dancing competition, went to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center following the live results show Tuesday. The judges selected the pair to perform an encore of their jitterbug routine from Monday's performance show.

"She was experiencing slight stomach pains all day that increased and the doctors thought it was best to have them checked out," said Hough's publicist, Cindy Guagenti. "But she didn't collapse."

Multiple contestants and professional dancers have sustained injuries this season.

Men sue Lindsay Lohan over wild ride

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP—A wild ride that led to Lindsay Lohan's arrest has

sparked another lawsuit. Court records show that three men who claim they were in a sport utility vehicle that Lohan commandeered in July 2007 sued the "Mean Girls" star last week.

Their allegations include battery, false imprisonment and that the actress was negligent when she allegedly took over one of the men's SUV to chase her recently fired assistant.

That chase ended when the assistant's mother called police because she was being followed and led Lohan toward a police station. Officers suspected Lohan was drunk and arrested her.

Lohan's attorney calls the lawsuit, first reported by TMZ, "absurd."

The men are seeking more than $25,000.

AP

This Oct. 13, 2008 file photo shows actress Lindsay Lohan during an appearance at Henri Bendel's in New York.

Terrence Howard: 'Iron Man' replacement was a surprise

Howard

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Terrence Howard says was surprised to learn that Don Cheadle would replace him in "Iron Man 2."

"It was the surprise of a lifetime," the actor and musician told National Public Radio on Tuesday. "There was no explanation, (the contract) just up and vanished."

Howard said he read news reports that money was the issue, saying the contracts he signs apparently "aren't worth the paper that they're printed on sometimes."

Cheadle assumes the role of James Rhodes, a character that becomes Iron Man's sidekick War Machine in the comics, according to The Hollywood Reporter. Robert Downey Jr. will reprise his role as weapons mogul Tony Stark.

Howard, who also starred in "Hustle & Flow," is promoting his new album "Shine Through It."

Sumner Redstone files for divorce

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Court documents show that entertainment mogul Sumner Redstone has filed for divorce from his wife of five years.

The 85-year-old executive chairman of CBS and Viacom petitioned for divorce Friday. The documents say Redstone and his wife, 46-year-old Paula Fortunato Redstone, already have a settlement agreement.

According to the papers, the couple married in April 2003 and have no children. Redstone's declaration cited "irreconcilable differences" but provided no further details.

Redstone's theater chain, National Amusements, moved last week to sell some of its nonvoting shares in both CBS and Viacom, saying the stock market put some of its debts at risk.

Forbes magazine calculated Redstone's wealth at $7.6 billion in 2007.

AP

In this July 19, 2008 file photo, actress Gillian Anderson poses for a portrait in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Gillian Anderson gives birth to a son in London

NEW YORK (AP)—Gillian Anderson, star of "The X-Files" TV series and movies, and her boyfriend Mark Griffiths, are the parents of a baby boy named Felix.

Anderson's manager, Connie Freiberg, said the baby was born Oct. 15 in London. Felix is the second child for Anderson, 40, and Griffiths, a British businessman. Their son Oscar will be 2 years old next month.

Freiberg said Anderson didn't name the boys after characters from the classic comedy "The Odd Couple."

"She's never even seen the show. She had no idea," Freiberg said Tuesday. "... I brought it up to her, and it really doesn't sink in."

Freiberg said Anderson, who has a 14-year-old daughter Piper from her marriage to production designer Clyde Klotz, is "happy as you can be."

Anderson co-stars in the comedy "How to Lose Friends & Alienate People," and recently starred in "The X-Files: I Want to Believe," the second feature film spun off from the Fox TV series.

Hulk Hogan's son out of Florida jail

Bollea

CLEARWATER, Fla. (AP)—The 18-year-old son of Hulk Hogan has been released from jail in Florida after serving five months for causing a serious traffic crash.

Nick Bollea was released from the Pinellas County Jail on Tuesday morning. He had pleaded no contest in May to causing the crash.

Bollea was arrested last year after authorities say he sped on a busy street and crashed his father's car, leaving a friend and former Marine permanently disabled.

Bollea could have faced five years in prison, but the victim's family requested a lesser sentence.

Bollea's mother, Linda, released a statement Tuesday asking for privacy. She says Nick went into prison as a juvenile and has experienced something that will mold and affect him for the rest of his adult life

Close female friendships start with reaching out

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: I would like to tell "Friend-Challenged in Glendale, Calif." (Aug. 2) that I have been in her shoes. She needs to make her desire for friendship known to others.

For years I had a pleasant life as a wife, mother and teacher with many colleagues and acquaintances through church and other interest groups. But inside I was desperately lonely for female friendship. No one ever truly "connected" beyond the surface level.

One afternoon I was walking with a colleague and she asked, philosophically, "What do you really need in your life?" I burst into tears and answered, "I need a friend!" We hugged and cried together, and from that moment on, our deeper heartfelt relationship began and widened to include several more women who are solid, there-for-each-other friends.

I am grateful for her insightful question and emotional support. She had no idea that I felt so isolated, and I learned to be more open about my needs.

BEFRIENDED AND BLESSED IN MICHIGAN

DEAR BEFRIENDED: I want to thank you for generously sharing that life lesson. The responses I received from readers offering advice, ideas and encouragement to the young woman who lacked female friendship were touching. A sample:

DEAR ABBY: There is an old adage: You have to BE a friend to HAVE one. It seems to me that "Challenged" never takes the extra step in establishing a relationship. The phone rings two ways, and sometimes you have to call people before they call you.

ELLEN IN CLEVELAND

DEAR ABBY: "Friend-Challenged" should become involved in community theater. There are always jobs waiting to be filled backstage, during rehearsals, at the box office, ushering or making costumes and props. Theater people will always welcome you and find a place for you to fit in.

SYLVIA IN MORGAN HILL, CALIF.

DEAR ABBY: In addition to women her age, that young woman should open herself up to those of all ages. I'm 37, but my friends include those who are 13 years younger and 54 years older than me. My best friend is 19 years older than me.

If she limits herself by looking in only one place, she will have a one-dimensional, flat life. Look everywhere. See everyone as a possible friend. You never know where it might lead you.

OPEN-HEARTED IN AMESBURY, MASS.

DEAR ABBY: I found your suggestions to "Friend-Challenged" outdated and sexist. Groups in cooking, sewing, scrapbooking? What about learning to ski, kayak or rock climb with other women? Or a running group, hiking club or tennis league? I've done many of these, and the women I met are fun, outgoing and always ready to welcome a new friend.

BRETT IN JACKSON, WYO.

DEAR ABBY: When I was 22, just out of college, I moved to a large city to begin my career. I knew no one, but found a church and joined a singles Sunday school class. I formed many friendships in that class. Twenty-four years later, many of those women are still my best friends.

DIANE IN ROSWELL, GA.

DEAR ABBY: On a whim I joined a belly dancing class. It changed my life! I met women of all shapes, sizes and ages who get together to dance for the sheer pleasure of it. To meet friends and transform her self-image, I suggest "Friend-Challenged" check around for belly dance studios in her area.

JENNY IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR ABBY: I joined an organization called Beta Sigma Phi—it's an international women's friendship network. It's a sorority, but not the kind you see on university campuses. I have made friends, learned new things and become more involved in the community. For information, including dues and fees, visit www.betasigmaphi.org or call (888) 238-2221 or (816) 444-6800.

SISTER FOR LIFE, ONTARIO, CANADA

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more attractive person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

I THINK PEOPLE WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT LITTLE THINGS.
ALL THEY DO IS MAKE THEMSELVES UNHAPPY THAT WAY.
WHY GET AN ULCER OVER THINGS THAT DON'T REALLY MATTER?
LIKE THE BOOK REPORT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE WRITING NOW ON THE BOOK YOU HAVEN'T READ?
EXACTLY. CASE IN POINT.
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10/23

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

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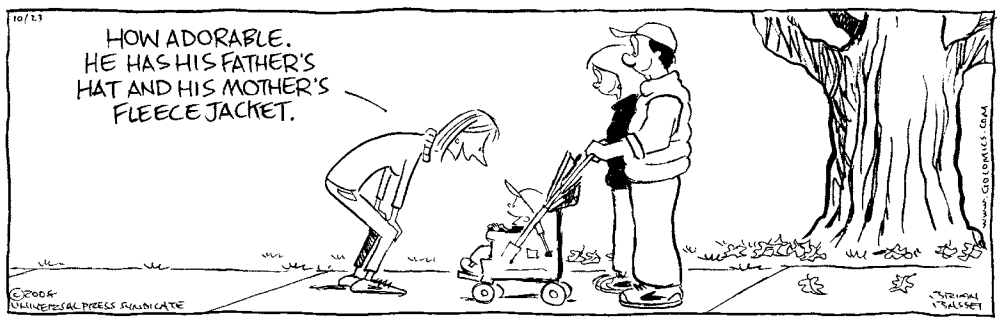
Text GARFIELD to 22646 US ONLY
WELL!
LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE HAD A GOOD NIGHT
I HAD THE SUICIDAL GIANT COOKIE DREAM AGAIN
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate
JIM DAVIS 10-23

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Long cut
5 Scrooge's cry
8 Treaty
12 Ready for the picking
13 Leading lady?
14 Perjurer
15 Concept
16 Author Fleming
17 Set of "Risk" tokens
18 Mark over a long vowel
20 Catnap
22 Trophy wife's partner
26 Speak like 51-Across
29 Central
30 100 square meters
31 Unctuous
32 Carton
33 Circulate
34 Praiseful poem
35 Entertainment
36 Horn noises
37 Britney and Christina, e.g.
40 Suspended
41 Spoof
45 Bridge
47 Part of UCLA
49 Responsibility
50 Teller's partner
51 Farm female
52 Elevator man
53 Bohemian
54 Gender
55 Zilch

DOWN
1 Gloomy
2 Verdi opera
3 Detail, for short
4 Inadmissible testimony of a sort
5 Existence
6 Ms. Gardner
7 Woodstock headliner
8 Shopping center
9 Black-and-tan terrier
10 Rotating part
11 Attempt
19 Chic no more
21 Peculiar
23 Surrounded by
24 Let fall
25 Some evergreens
26 Not-so-ugly Betty
27 Beach resort
28 GOP symbol
32 Messes up
33 Decorate
35 Half a sawbuck
36 Support system?
38 Optimistic
39 New Jersey county
42 Digging
43 Destruction
44 Latin 5-Down
45 Masseur's workplace
46 Apiece
48 Have bills

Solution time: 25 mins.

		D	E	W			W	S	W			
	C	O	L	A		A	R	I	E	S		
A	L	G	E	R		S	I	N	B	A	D	
S	O	M	E	T	H	I	N	G	B	L	U	E
S	P	A		H	E	D	G	E		M	E	N
			M	O	R	E			D	O	T	S
	M	E	R	G	E		B	R	U	N	O	
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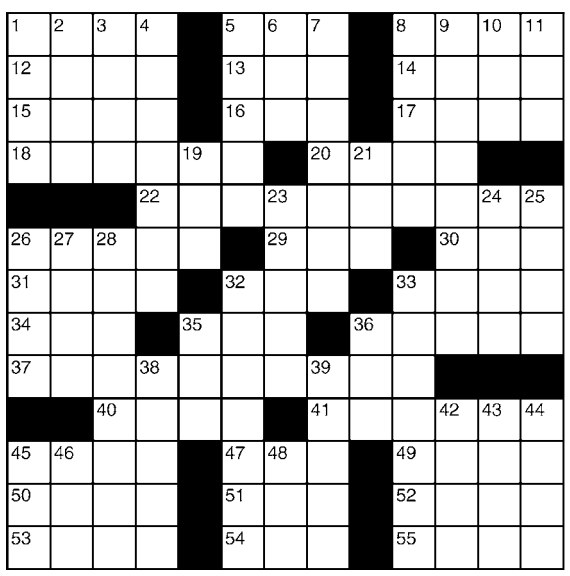
			E	W	E			G	U	S		

Yesterday's answer 10-23



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Masiela Lusha, 23; Al Leiter, 43; Ang Lee, 54; Michael Crichton, 66

Happy Birthday: Plan your actions carefully this year. One slip and you may lose your footing. Be willing to listen to sound advice and reason and open your mind to options and opportunities. Don't let envy or bad feelings consume you to a point where you miss out on something you should take part in. Your numbers are 3, 5, 12, 21, 27, 39, 47

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Avoid getting too many steps ahead of yourself or you will miss out on something important. Someone you work with is likely to make your life difficult. Deal with this matter cordially. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Learning something new or taking in a place you've never been before will motivate you to get out more and enjoy life. A bit of heat between you and someone you admire will build. Be open-minded. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): It will be hard to please everyone and you can expect someone who knows you well to complain or criticize you for your current choices. Consider the consequences of what you are planning before moving forward. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Clear up any issues you have with friends, relatives or neighbors. You can come up with practical solutions that will satisfy everyone's needs and make you look like a champion. Your responsibilities are about to change. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Trying to get revenge or lashing out in anger will not solve anything. Use your Leo finesse and generous nature to get your way. Love is in the picture so avoid a squabble that will cost you emotionally and financially. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Love may appear to conquer all but, in the process of having fun, do not let your bankbook suffer. If you have to pay for love, you are better off finding someone who is a better fit. Make the changes needed to protect your assets. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Push for what you want and don't stop until you get it. You will be able to call in favors and twist arms to change the parameters of any deal you are working on or any challenge you face with someone in your life. Prime yourself for success. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Emotional deception is evident. Be careful what you reveal and consider how much truth there is to what you're being told. Personal change is upon you and to prolong it any further is torture you can do without. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): You are in dire need of a new adventure. Pick a destination—distance doesn't matter. It's the experience that will mold your plans for the future. An old friend will open your eyes to the facts you may be ignoring. ✪✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Stop worrying about the little things and focus on the things you feel passionate about. There is money to be made but you will do so much better if you actually enjoy what you are doing. Follow through with long-range plans. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Decide who in your life is actually doing you good and who isn't. By incorporating the right person as your running mate for life, you'll map out a successful future. Money will come to you from an unusual source. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): If you take on the responsibilities you face alone, you will have no one to answer to in the end. An incident with someone from your past should be a healthy reminder of what to do now. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are original, unpredictable and will always stand up for the underdog. You speak with conviction and follow your intuition in emotional matters.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	7				4			9
		4					1	3
			1				7	
						8		5
		7		9		4		
6		3						
	4				9			
3	6					7		
8			3				2	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 10/23

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

3	1	6	8	5	9	2	4	7
2	7	8	4	3	6	9	1	5
9	4	5	2	7	1	6	3	8
5	6	3	1	2	4	8	7	9
1	2	7	3	9	8	4	5	6
4	8	9	7	6	5	3	2	1
8	9	2	5	1	3	7	6	4
7	5	4	6	8	2	1	9	3
6	3	1	9	4	7	5	8	2

Difficulty Level ★★★ 10/22

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

THE GREEN PARTY **Solution: 10 letters**

S	E	G	R	Y	G	O	L	O	C	E	C	A	E	P
Y	E	C	A	M	S	I	V	I	T	C	A	S	E	A
T	A	V	R	O	T	S	I	S	E	R	S	T	R	R
I	Y	G	I	U	C	A	N	D	I	D	A	T	E	T
L	Y	T	E	T	O	O	C	H	A	N	G	E	S	I
I	E	C	I	N	A	S	A	L	E	V	E	L	E	C
B	Q	C	I	S	D	T	E	S	T	S	E	A	R	I
I	U	E	N	L	R	A	N	R	S	A	U	B	A	P
S	A	T	V	A	O	E	O	E	D	E	A	O	C	A
N	L	A	O	O	T	P	V	E	S	L	M	R	H	T
O	I	T	T	C	P	S	R	I	L	E	E	B	T	O
P	T	S	E	U	S	S	I	O	D	F	R	T	L	R
S	Y	L	S	O	L	U	T	I	O	N	S	P	A	Y
E	E	S	E	Z	I	L	A	R	T	N	E	C	E	D
R	E	T	N	E	C	A	M	P	A	I	G	N	H	R

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Yesterday's Answer: Kingston

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20 October 2008

Mr. Michael J. Ada
Director of Banking
Department of Commerce
Saipan, MP 96950

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Per your instruction, I will be submitting all the remittance report to date together with the Affidavit that there are no outstanding remittances on November 3, 2008.

I will also publish the Notice of Closure in the newspaper within this week and next week.

Thank you for kind help and support to the company. We really appreciate it.

Sincerely,

WANG NA
General Manager

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

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joins Micronesia su
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Patriots' Harrison's injury appears career-ending

AP

New England Patriots' Rodney Harrison (37) leaves the field after being injured in the fourth quarter of an NFL football game, Monday, Oct. 20, 2008 against the Denver Broncos, in Foxborough, Mass.

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP)—Rodney Harrison's career is almost certainly over after the hard-hitting but injury-plagued safety of the New England Patriots tore his right thigh muscle.

"It appears as though the rehab could take 8 to 10 months," a person familiar with the injury told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the team has not made an official announcement.

"For all intents and purposes, his career is over," the person, who confirmed the nature of the injury, said in an e-mail Tuesday.

Harrison, a 15-year veteran, two-time Pro Bowler and two-time Super Bowl champion, tore the quadriceps muscle without being hit while chasing scrambling quarterback Jay Cutler on the last play of the third quarter of the Patriots' 41-7 win over the Denver Broncos on Monday night.

Harrison has had persistent thigh problems as far back as last season's playoffs.

"He's had a slight tear all (this) season," Bill McLaughlin, a marketing representative for Harrison, said Tuesday. "He was getting treatment on it."

Harrison was listed on the Patriots injury report with a thigh problem before their first two playoff games last season. The injury kept him out of practice two days before New England's 21-12 win over San Diego in the AFC championship game. He was not on the injury report for the Super Bowl, won by the New York Giants 17-14.

Harrison played in all three of those games.

The NFL Network first reported Tuesday that Harrison had a torn quad. The Boston Globe later reported he had a torn right quad. During the game, it was announced he had a knee injury.

Harrison played in all six games this season and was not listed on any injury reports but "was injured the whole time," McLaughlin said. "He's played through injuries before."

Harrison, in the final year of his contract, might have retired anyway after this season following a succession of serious injuries in two of the three previous years.

After being injured Monday, Harrison pointed to his teammates and waved to the crowd as he was driven off the field on a cart.

Coach Bill Belichick gave no update on the injury during his conference call Tuesday, but said after the game that it didn't look good.

"It was difficult for all of us to watch Rodney be carted off like he did," Belichick said Tuesday. "We hope that all goes well for him."

The Patriots (4-2) already are without quarterback Tom Brady, who suffered a season-ending knee injury in the opener, and running back Laurence Maroney, whose season ended when he went on injured reserve Monday with a shoulder injury. Belichick refused to say if Maroney would need surgery.

Sammy Morris rushed for 138 yards in his place but hurt his knee and didn't play in the second half. Belichick said his status was day to day.

The injury to the 35-year-old Harrison is his fourth in four years.

In 2005, he tore three ligaments in his left knee in the third game and missed the rest of the season and the playoffs. The next season, he sat out six games with a broken right shoulder blade and returned for two before suffering a strained right knee in the final regular-season game and missing the playoffs.

He was healthy last season but missed the first four games for violating the league's substance abuse policy. He said he used the substance, believed to be human growth hormone, to speed up his healing process.

This season, he started all six games and had one interception.

Harrison made five tackles Monday before the injury.

"Rodney is one of the leaders on the defense from experience and from his playing style and production," Belichick said. "He's a good player. He's been a good player (for the Patriots) just going on six years now.

"It was hard to watch him go through what happened last night. That's tough. I feel badly for him. You hate to see that with any player, but that was very unfortunate for him and we all feel badly for him."

Safety Brandon Meriweather, a first-round draft choice last year, got his third interception of the season Monday and likely would move into a starting role.

Harrison made the Pro Bowl in 1998 and 2001 during his nine-year stint with San Diego. The Chargers cut him after the 2002 season when he was slowed by an ankle injury.

The Patriots signed him as a free agent in March 2003 and they won Super Bowls in each of their first two seasons with him. In six seasons with New England, he had nine sacks and eight interceptions.

The aggressive Harrison, the target of complaints by some opponents of dirty hits, has been fined more than $200,000 by the NFL. He was suspended for one game in 2002 for a helmet-to-helmet hit on Oakland's Jerry Rice that cost him a game check of $111,764.

But Harrison also has been a mentor to players like 24-year-old James Sanders, the Patriots other starting safety.

"He is a future Hall of Famer. He is one of the best to play this game. He has taught me a lot," Sanders said in the locker room after Monday's victory. "I am going to go to the training room and see how he is doing and let him know I am here for him."

NFL BRIEFS

Romo says he won't play against Tampa Bay

DALLAS (AP)—Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo said Tuesday night his broken right pinkie likely will sideline him again this Sunday. Romo, who was injured in Dallas' overtime loss to the Arizona Cardinals on Oct. 12, was expected to be out three to four weeks but had hoped to play last Sunday against St. Louis. He warmed up before the game and said Tuesday he couldn't grab the ball and throw it quickly. Brad Johnson got the start against the Rams, and threw three interceptions in the Cowboys' 34-14 loss to the Rams. It looks as if the 40-year-old backup will be behind center again when Dallas hosts Tampa Bay on Sunday. "It's going to be Brad. Brad is going to go this week unless something happens that I don't foresee," Romo said on Terrell Owens' "Inside the Huddle" radio show at the House of Blues. Romo's absence would be a big blow for the slumping Cowboys (4-3), who have lost three of four.

Browns suspend Kellen Winslow for 1 game

CLEVELAND (AP)—The Cleveland Browns unveiled their own defensive scheme to shut down Kellen Winslow. The team suspended their talented, emotional tight end for one game without pay for critical comments Winslow made following Sunday's loss at Washington. Winslow, who spent three days at the Cleveland Clinic earlier this month with an undisclosed illness, revealed he had a staph infection—for the second time—before lashing out at Browns general manager Phil Savage as the Pro Bowler's teammates dressed after their 14-11 loss to the Redskins. Winslow complained that the team, which has had at least six cases of staph in the past three years, asked him to conceal his illness. He also vented at Savage for not checking on him while he was in the hospital, said he felt the Browns were treating him like a "piece of meat," and said he considered requesting a trade. Savage shot back with a 352-word statement on Tuesday, suspending Winslow and calling his comments and behavior "unwarranted, inappropriate, and unnecessarily disparaging to our organization.

Singletary vows to raise 49ers' intensity

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP)—Mike Singletary radiated an uncommon intensity during his Hall of Fame career with the Chicago Bears. He then spent a decade giving motivational speeches before getting into coaching in 2003 as Mike Nolan's right-hand man.

With yet another season nearly lost in San Francisco, the woebegone 49ers will need every bit of intensity and motivation they can get from the former linebacker with the famously fierce eyes.

Singletary became the 49ers' interim head coach Tuesday, replacing his coaching mentor with a vow to build on the foundation he built with Nolan—even if he only gets nine games to do it.

"Right now, the guys realize that we do have something here," Singletary said. "To what degree, I don't know, but we do have something special here. It's a matter of stepping in and being able to bring it together, and that's something I've done all my life."

After the club fired Nolan seven games into his fourth season, Singletary had mixed feelings Monday night when general manager Scot McCloughan asked him to take charge. Although Singletary has interviewed for four top jobs in the NFL and another at Baylor, his alma mater, the thought of replacing Nolan made him uneasy until he spoke to the man who had just been dismissed.

"(I) looked at (Nolan) and he looked at me, and before I said a word, he said, 'I want you to take this job,'" Singletary recalled. "'I know that you have the heart of the players at hand, and I know they're important to you. ... If you do not take the job, I will be very disappointed in you as my friend.'"

Singletary's appointment gives the NFL seven black head coaches, matching the most in league history. He's the third coach to take over a club during the current season, joining St. Louis' Jim Haslett and Oakland's Tom Cable.

Singletary had been Nolan's assistant head coach since 2005 with the 49ers (2-5), who went 18-37 in Nolan's tenure and lost their fourth straight game last Sunday to the New York Giants. McCloughan said he approached owners John and Jed York "a couple of weeks ago" with a plan to fire Nolan, who hired him in 2005 when the Yorks gave control of all football operations to a career assistant coach with no background in personnel.

When the Yorks agreed, McCloughan didn't even wait until the 49ers' bye next week to drop Nolan.

"I don't think there is a right time for a decision like this," said McCloughan, who gained decision-making authority over Nolan last winter after the 49ers' third straight losing season under Nolan. "If you go off of past experiences and talking to people, the bye week is usually the best week. ... But I think with the distractions on the outside, the most important thing is for us to be ready to play this week, to play against the Seahawks."

Nolan released a brief statement through the 49ers thanking his players for their hard work.

"It is the responsibility of the head coach to build a foundation and an environment for success," Nolan said. "In many areas we were, although it is winning that ultimately determines success."

Kazmir and Hamels linked since high school

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)—Even as teenagers, Scott Kazmir and Cole Hamels were linked by their left arms.

A pair of high school pitchers brimming with promise, both slotted for the first round of the 2002 amateur draft. When they got picked two spots apart, the comparisons were inevitable.

Six years later, they're set to square off on baseball's biggest stage Wednesday night when Kazmir and the worst-to-first Tampa Bay Rays host Philadelphia in Game 1 of a World Series matchup that hardly anyone expected.

Pretty heady stuff for these two budding aces, both still shy of their 25th birthday.

"I think we relate at the same level, because we've had to go through the same experiences," Hamels said Tuesday before the Phillies worked out at tricky Tropicana Field.

Their teams have something in common, too: a history of losing.

Tampa Bay's tale is hard to believe—10 futile seasons as a perennial doormat before this sudden surge to American League supremacy. On the other side, the Phillies, with one championship (1980) in 125 seasons and more losses than any franchise in professional sports.

This ain't exactly Yankees-Dodgers or Celtics-Lakers.

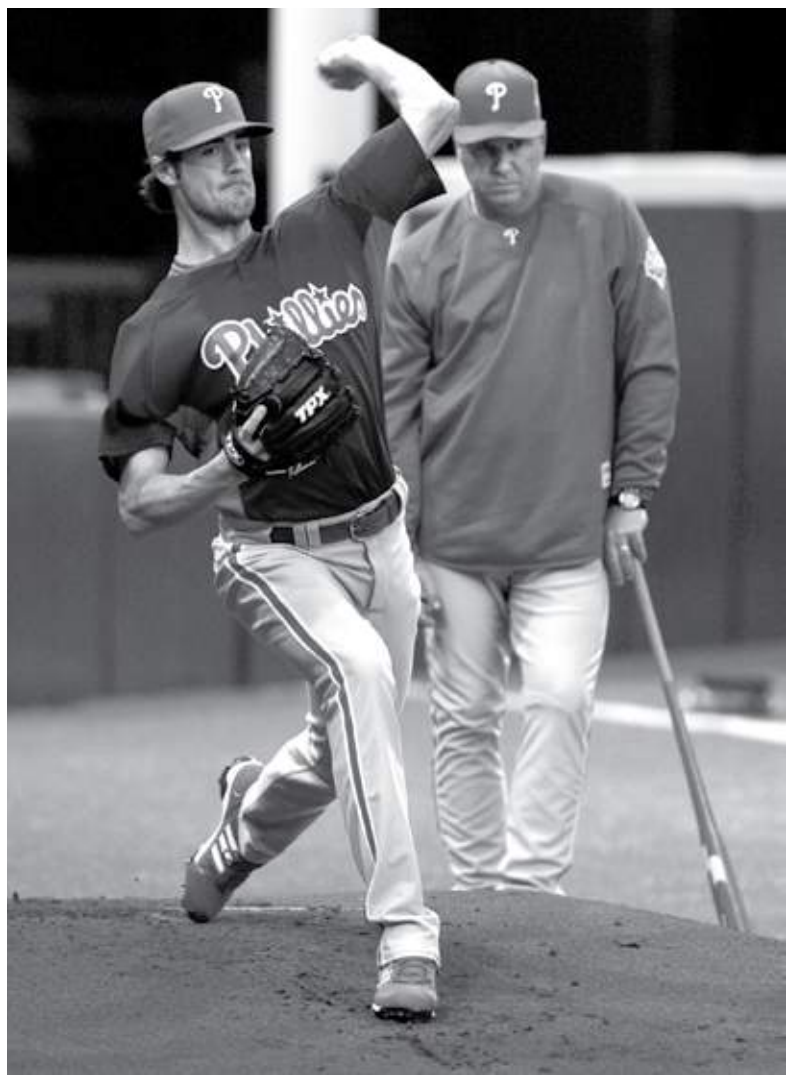
But for Kazmir, Carl Crawford and the rest of the Rays who endured growing pains season after season in a nearly empty dome, their new success is all that matters.

"It means everything to me, it really does, especially for this city," Kazmir said. "It's pretty much worth the wait, you could say, for what we had to go through the past four years."

The Rays, who dropped the "Devil" from their nickname before the season, have been stockpiling young talent and top draft picks for years. Still, few thought they could complete such a remarkable turnaround so fast - besides Kazmir.

Back in spring training, the lefty predicted Tampa Bay could end up playing in October. Little was made of that comment at the time, but now Kazmir looks like a Gulf Coast prophet.

Against the Phillies, he'll have to contend with a potent lineup that includes NL MVPs Ryan Howard and Jimmy Rollins, plus slugging second baseman Chase Utley. No easy task for a hard-thrower who often struggles to get deep in games.



AP

Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Cole Hamels is watched by pitching coach Rich Dubee during their practice at Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, Fla., Monday, Oct. 20, 2008.

After going 12-8 with a 3.49 ERA and earning his second All-Star appearance this season, Kazmir labored through his first two playoff starts - raising questions about his health. But he put those to rest with six shutout innings of two-hit ball in Game 5 of the AL championship series at Boston.

"It's not an injury situation. He just was uncomfortable," Rays manager Joe Maddon said. "The other day against the Red Sox, I think you saw more sliders coming back into the mix, which I like. And he's got a very good changeup. I don't have a real intelligent explanation, other than I just thought that he got out of his delivery a bit, maybe started over-thinking it a little bit."

Tampa Bay blew a seven-run lead after Kazmir left, but regrouped to beat Boston in Game 7 at home Sunday night. Unfazed by the kooky catwalks, slick artificial turf and slanted white roof at the Trop Shop, the Rays have bedeviled visitors all year. They went a major league-best 57-24 at home during the season, then 4-2 in the playoffs.

The baby-faced Kazmir is a big reason Tampa Bay has home-field advantage for the World Series, too. He was the winning pitcher in the July 15 All-Star game at Yankee Stadium.

As for Hamels, he's been tough to hit anywhere. After shutting down the Los Angeles Dodgers, the NLCS MVP is 3-0 with a 1.23 ERA in three postseason starts this year, striking out 22 and walking six in 22 dominant innings.

Perhaps his biggest concern now is a six-day layoff before his World Series debut. He and the Phillies hope to look more rested than rusty.

"Because I can't throw in a live game, I just throw in the bullpen. And it's just the focus that you have to have," said Hamels, sporting boyishly long dark hair. "When I go out to my bullpen, I do try to visualize that there's a hitter out there, and I try to make every pitch count, as though it's a game situation."

Hamels went 14-10 with a 3.09 ERA in 33 regular-season starts. Including the playoffs, he's thrown 249 1-3 innings this year, 66 more than his previous high set last season.

"Every time he walks out on the mound I expect him to win a game," Philadelphia manager Charlie Manuel said. "He's definitely capable of shutting a team out. He's capable of throwing no-hitters."

After Hamels, the Phillies' rotation is Brett Myers, 45-year-old Jamie Moyer and midseason addition Joe Blanton. Manuel said he wouldn't reveal his choice for designated hitter until Wednesday.

James Shields will start Game 2 for the Rays. When the series shifts to Philadelphia for Game 3, it will be ALCS MVP Matt Garza followed by Andy Sonnanstine.

Another Red Sox headed for surgery: the manager

BOSTON (AP)—Terry Francona has won two World Series championships in five seasons—as many as any Red Sox manager in franchise history.

And he has these souvenirs of his time in Boston as well: A foot infection, a knee replacement, staph infections in both knees, chest pains, several years on blood-thinners, a life-threatening blood clot in his lungs and now a back problem that will require surgery.

"This job takes an unbelievable amount (out of you). Sometimes it almost sucks the life out of you," he told reporters Tuesday in a season-ending interview that was postponed a day so he could recover from symptoms of the flu.

"It does take it out of you—this place more than any other place I've seen. And I do have some health issues, there's no getting around it. So I need to go get checked and get some of that fixed, but if there's ever a day where I don't feel like I can do my job, I won't do it."

Francona is due for back surgery this offseason to deal with a problem that has left him with diminished feeling in his arms and unable to stand up straight at times. He's been aware of the problem since May, but only now does he have the opportunity to take care of it without missing a large swath of the baseball season.

"This game is kind of crazy. I laugh when people say 'It winds down.' No, it comes to a crashing halt. You're going 100 miles an hour and then it's over. You either won or you lost," he said. "You need to be careful (about making decisions) the day after the season's over, especially when you've been sick and you don't feel good."

The Red Sox lost on Sunday night when the Tampa Bay Rays beat them 3-1 in Game 7 of the AL championship series to win the pennant and advance to the World Series. That left the defending champions staring into the offseason, but it also gives them a little extra time to recuperate.

In addition to the manager, third baseman and '07 World Series MVP Mike Lowell is recovering from surgery, to his hip; Josh Beckett is resting a side strain that kept him from performing like an ace in the playoffs; Curt Schilling missed all of last year with a sore shoulder and is eyeing a midseason return; David Ortiz needs rest for his ailing left wrist.

The offseason could be shortened for some of the players because the second World Baseball Classic is scheduled for the spring. Francona said the Red Sox have not addressed how to approach the tournament, which surely will be calling for some of the Boston players.

Daisuke Matsuzaka was the MVP when he pitched Japan to victory in the inaugural tournament in 2006.

"Because we are a pretty diverse group, and we're a pretty good team, we'll probably have a lot of guys who will be considered," Francona said. "He's very excited about it, also. I don't know how to get around it. They've come up with that plan, and you follow it. We'll do the best we can."

The Red Sox had to deal with an early start this year when they opened the 2008 season in Japan, a schedule Francona said took a lot out of them.

"Any time you go 6,000 miles to play two games, that's a tough trip," he said. "I think we said right away that we wouldn't allow that to be an excuse. ... It was good for Major League Baseball, and I hope that we were a good representative, a respectful representative."

NBA BRIEFS

Bryant leaves game with knee injury

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Kobe Bryant hyperextended his right knee in the second quarter of the Los Angeles Lakers' exhibition game Tuesday night. Bryant, who scored four points in 14 minutes against the Charlotte Bobcats, did not come out with the team for the second half. The Lakers announced Bryant will be re-examined Wednesday. Bryant did not speak with reporters after Los Angeles' 102-98 victory. "I didn't even ask him about the injury," coach Phil Jackson said. "The trainer said he hyperextended his knee somewhat. We'll see what it's like (Wednesday), then go from there." Bryant injured his knee jumping for a rebound with 3:08 left in the first half. The reigning NBA MVP limped off the court favoring his right leg. He motioned to the bench to come out and Jackson called a 20-second timeout.

Deron Williams out at least 2 weeks

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—The Utah Jazz will be opening the regular season without their top player. Point guard Deron Williams is out for at least two weeks with a sprained ankle, the Jazz said Monday, two days after Williams was injured in a preseason game at Chicago. Results from an MRI done Monday morning showed no damage to the bone and tendons around the ankle, but the second-degree sprain will keep Williams out of the lineup for a minimum of two weeks, the Jazz said. That would include the first two games of the regular season, which starts next Wednesday when the Jazz host Denver. Utah is likely to be extra cautious with the team's young leader, who averaged almost 19 points and 10.5 assists last season and has led the Jazz to the playoffs in two of his three years in the NBA. "You can't worry about those things. Anybody can get hurt. That's just part of the business," coach Jerry Sloan said before Monday's practice. The Jazz knew Williams would be out for a while after he was carried off the court Saturday after landing on Chicago rookie Derrick Rose's foot on a 3-pointer in the first quarter.

Celtics waive F Darius Miles

BOSTON (AP)—The Boston Celtics have waived forward Darius Miles, who missed the past two seasons with knee injuries and who was suspended without pay for 10 games this season for violating the NBA's anti-drug program. The Celtics said Monday that its training camp roster now has 15 players. Boston signed Miles as a free agent Aug. 22. He averaged 1.8 points and 1.3 rebounds in six preseason games. Miles' suspension will begin with the first game of the regular season for which he is eligible and physically able to play. The 27-year-old was selected third overall by the Los Angeles Clippers in the 2000 draft. He has averaged 10.6 points and 5.2 rebounds in his career.

Former Celtics owner Mangurian dead at 82

BOSTON (AP)—Harry Mangurian Jr., a former owner of the Boston Celtics and renowned horse breeder, has died of leukemia. He was 82. The funeral home handling his arrangements said Mangurian died Sunday. He died at Holy Cross Hospital in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., after an eight month battle with the disease. Mangurian owned the Celtics from 1979-83, a tenure that included a championship in 1981 and the signings of Larry Bird, Kevin McHale and Robert Parish, the original "Big Three" of team lore. Mangurian was successful at numerous business ventures, including his start as owner of a family run furniture store and as a breeder of champion horses on a 1,100 acre thoroughbred farm in Ocala, Fla. Mangurian was born in Rochester, N.Y. He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Dorothy, and two daughters.

Sakudi draws first blood in BASA women's finals

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Sakudi defeated the Hitters, 13-4, in the opening game of the 2008 Belau Amateur Softball Association League women's finals last Sunday at the Dandan Ballfield.

The win gave the Sakudi a 1-0 lead and it could wrap up the best-of-three semifinal series when the two teams meet again in Game 2 on Nov. 2.

There will be no game this Sunday, Oct. 26, due to the unavailability of the playing venue.

BASA president Brian Adelbai said the wildcard entry for the Final Four in the 2008 Budweiser King of the Diamonds would be played at the ballfield.

Sakudi used a commanding 10-1 lead early on in the game, five in the bottom of the first inning and five in the second, on the way to the overpowering win.

Kayla Techur, Pauline Tudela, and Jenny Palacios scored three runs each, including one each in the bottom of the fourth that gave Sakudi a 13-1 advantage and never look back.

Ank Ngirbedul scored the game's first run in the top of the first but the Hitters could only manage to make a hit twice in the next five innings as they groped for form.

Emy Quitugun, Daylin Joseph, and Thelma Mizer reached home plate in the seventh inning but that was the best the Hitters could do in the game.

Sakudi's pitcher Charlene Cabrera charged back with two successive groundouts, on third base against the Hitters Felisa Brel and Edwina, for the morale-boosting win.

Last Oct. 12, Sakudi defeated Atu Asi, 12-1, in the semifinals to arrange the title-showdown with the Hitters.

The Hitters, on the other hand, advanced via a hard-earned 9-7 decision at the expense of Ohn Sakau.

In the men's division playoffs, Brotherhood and SaiPal arranged a semifinal match-up after winning over their respective rivals on Sunday.

Brotherhood, the pennant winner, extended its victory run by beating PIC, 11-0, to advance.

SaiPal survived a late rally by PTI to prevail by a narrow margin, 9-7.

In the other semifinal match-up, the Choll Aces and the Man Amigos will vie for the slot, to be also played on Nov. 2.

Man Amigos came from behind to nail the league's closest game of the season, a 2-1 decision over Auel Auel.

Both teams did not score in the first five innings until Mike Taitano reached home plate on a single by Stan Aldan.

Pete Sablan and Jeff Cabrera saved the day for their team with one run each in the seventh and final inning and Man Amigos staved off elimination.

The Choll Aces also advanced to the semifinals by hammering out a 13-2 victory over Ready Mix.

Miller bails Alaska in endgame as Aces stay on top

MANILA, Philippines—Willie Miller proved once again that he's one of the best closers in the PBA.

The 5-foot-11 veteran guard delivered the telling blows as Alaska survived a late charge by Rain or Shine with a 91-84 win to keep its clean slate intact in the KFC-PBA Philippine Cup Sunday night at the Araneta Coliseum.

The two-time league Most Valuable Player scored 21 points, including three straight baskets—back-to-back jumpers and a huge three-pointer—that broke the last deadlock at 78-78 and gave the Aces an 85-78 lead with two minutes left.

Alaska 91 – Miller 21, Tenorio 18, Dela Cruz 13, Hugnatan 10, Cariaso 9, De Vance 7, Thoss 5, Ferriols 4, Fonacier 2, Sotto 2, Borboran 0.

Rain or Shine 84 – Reyes 16, Wainwright 14, Norwood 12, Tang 11, Mercado 8, Isip 7, Laure 5, Arana 4, Salangsang 3, Andaya 2, Ibanes 2.

Quarterscores: 25-20, 52-39, 74-58, 91-84. ***(www.pba.com.ph)***

4 division titles at stake in Loyola Yearend Tennis tourney

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Loyola Yearend Tennis Tournament will be held this weekend at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan courts with four division titles at stake.

Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan instructor Peter Loyola said interested participants can join the Open Junior and Levels 1, 2, and 3 divisions.

"Players will be categorized according to their skill level not on their age group," said Loyola, who added that the tournament will mix male and female players.

Loyola said the tournament on Oct. 25 and 26 will serve as a tune-up for the NMITA Fall Classic which will be held next month.

The Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan instructor added that holding this kind of tournament is one way of helping the island develop junior tennis players.

The Open Junior and Levels 2 and 3 divisions will be using the Pro Set scoring system, which allows a player to win a match once he scored eight points in a one-set game only. Matches in Level 1 division will have the regular scoring, but will also be played in one set.

The Top 4 winners in each division will be awarded with trophies.

The two-day tournament, which is supported by the Tan and Isuka families, will have a double-elimination format.

Interested participants have until today to submit entry forms.

The weekend netfest will be Loyola's third this year.

Five months ago, Loyola hosted a tournament for both adult and junior players.

The adult competition featured Class A and B divisions, while the junior event was divided into two age groups.

Lydia Tan ruled the Class A division beating Melanie Daly in the finals, 8-5. It was Tan's third Class A title after winning two last year.

Sakiko Eda topped Class B, thumping Vicki Izuka and Mayling Colombo.

In the boys' 13-and-under age group, Chris Park won over Chris Cepeda, Jeron Ano, and Grant Rhee.

The girls' and boys' 9-and-under divisions had Sakura Imaya and Carl Dela Cruz as top winners. Imaya defeated Gio Song in the finals, 6-0, while Dela Cruz prevailed over Kevin Rhee, 6-2.

For more information on this weekend's tournament, contact Loyola at 285-3135 or via email at pbloyola@yahoo.com.

JAZY

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Saipan's Tyce Mister, who settled for third after clocking in at 1:46:35.

Twenty-one other riders competed in the road bike category with Lewie Tenorio (1:47:43), Florian Briag (1:48:09), Kieran Daly (1:48:44), Butch Sublemente (1:48:52), Renato Calage (1:53:19), Dirk Sharer (1:54:02), and Cesar Fortaleza (1:58:01) making it to the Top 10.

Other finishers in the road bike division were Willy Barbo (2:03:03), Russ Quinn (2:04.38), Philip Gauang (2:06:01), Manny Sitchon (2:07.45), Fred Camacho (2:11:21), Florence Antonio (2:15:38), Direncio Barbo (2:21:28), Danilo Paquerez (2:21:40), Andy Nutting (2:23:54), Joshua Berger (2:26:33), Shogo Ando (2:37:16), Steve Nutting (2:3:14), Cooper Graf (2:41:33), and Michael Johnson (2:52:21).

Twenty-three riders joined the mountain bike division with Gary Bandoja finishing ahead of the pack recording 1:53:53. Placing second and third were Federico Fernandez (2:02:34) and Antonio Aguilar (2:06:25).

Completing the Top 10 were Mario Galang (2:10:11), Ernesto Apostol (2:10:13), Rogelio Valdez (2:15:19), Ken Pierson (2:18:12), James Barry (2:19:15), Alexander Racoma (2:20:41), and Alex Tangcoy (2:24:34).

Also joining the mountain bike race were Jim Arenovski (2:27:07), Jeffrey Diyco (2:29:42), Joseph Liberato (2:37:02), Chris Fryling (2:39:52), Silvano Tatako (2:41:27), Larry Calayag (2:41:47), Bernard Laborce (2:45:20), Nomer Mangalinao (2:50:43), and Antonio Ricando (2:52:20).

In the women's division, Kimiko Hasegawa was the first finisher in the road bike timing in at 2:15:58, and beating Kanae Quinn (2:21.52).

Heather Kennedy won the mountain bike category, clocking in at 2:23:30, and outracing Mamiko Berger (2:34:38).

Sunday's race was a warmup for the 2008 Hell of the Marianas 100km Race, which will hit the road on Dec. 6

For more information or to register, contact Cole Pritchard or Kanae Quinn at 235-6231, ext. 5148 or ext. 5130 or email at seaexec@picsaipan. com or dosm@picsaipan. com.

The HOM will have competition in three divisions, namely the four-man team, two-man team, and solo.

DOLPHINS

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layup fell short.

There was a scramble for the loose ball with Ogo diving for it, but failed to established his position and was called for a traveling violation.

Kagman sued for time in the last 14.1 seconds of the game with MHS getting ball possession back.

The Dolphins inbounded the ball and Aurelio found Eddie Manalili inside the paint with the latter missing his shot, but getting a foul from Ichirato Faisao.

Manalili missed his first free throw, but canned an insurance basket, making his second charity to give MHS a 62-59, lead with 6.1 second remaining on the clock.

Anthony Salas inbounded the ball from the baseline and threw a pitch to Maratita, who was near the left sideline of the Ayuyus' frontcourt. But Maratita failed to catch the ball, as Salas' pitch past the sideline, returning the possession to MHS and sealing the doom for the Ayuyus.

The Dolphins had a good start in the league opener, taking a 15-7 lead and hung on to the lead at halftime, 25-21.

Kagman caught up with MHS in the third period behind Faisao and Dominic Reyes, tying the game at 41-all.

Both teams started the fourth period with errors, until successive free throws from Nino Feria give MHS a 58-52 lead, going into the last three minutes of the game. Feria went 6-for-8 from the free throw line in the fourth period, but his impressive performance from the 15-foot line was almost put into waste when Kagman made a run in the last two minutes of the match.

The Ayuyus finished runner-up to Saipan Southern High School last year, losing in the one game finals, 102-115. The Dolphins placed third, beating Mt. Carmel School in the battle for third place.

The Manta Rays will begin their title defense on Wednesday against the Knights.

MHS 62 – Aurelio 17, Feria 10, Manalili 9, Ambalan 5, Deleon Guerero 4, Hidalgo 2, Sarmiento 2, Sula 2.

KHS 59 – Reyes 13, Faisao 11, Maratita 10, Babauta 9, Kaipat 4, Ogo 3, Mettao 1, Salas 1.

Scoring by quarters: 15-7, 25-21, 41-all, 62-59.

Referees: Arnold Mesa and Connie Camacho.

ACME

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tonight.

Other games tonight will be MHS Peers vs. Thai One on at 5:30pm; Off Twice vs. Karakuchi at 6:30pm; and Enyophace vs. Champ On at 7:30pm.

Enyophace did not have a game on Tuesday but remained in second place with a 5-1 record. It suffered its lone defeat to Acme Roofing.

Enyophace is currently leading the rest of the field in sets won with 16. This is two more than Acme Roofing's 14. Thai One On, MHS Peers and Kimichi had 11 each, while Off Twice and MHS Oakies are tied with 10 each.

Thai One On and MHS Peers defeated their respective rivals to stay in the middle of the team standings with identical 4-2 markings.

Thai One On prevailed in the first two sets, 21-5, 21-5 to ensure a victory over MHS Serves Up before dropping the third set, 15-21.

It was Serves Up's sixth defeat in as many games.

MHS Peers also fashioned out a similar win against Champ-On, 22-20, 21-8, 19-22.

The loss quickly snapped Champ On's victory ride following its first win in seven assignments in its previous game against Serves Up.

In the other match-up, MHS Oakies repulsed from the gallant fight put up by Kimoichi and scored the night's biggest upset win, 21-13, 14-21 and 21-14.

With the loss, Kimoichi went down in the team standings from third place to fifth with its current record of 4-3, while MHS Oakies stayed in eighth position with 3-4.

NMITF

From Page 28

season off, Quinn said they are still open for membership and interested individuals who will sign up today will only pay $25, which covers the fee for the remaining months of 2008 and for the entire 2009

"That's 14.5 months for the price of 12 (months). This fee helps us run local events and keep running, hiking, and biking trails year around, plus it allows us to introduce new sports, like orienteering. And as always, there are discounts on all NMITF-sanctioned events," he added.

Orienteering is an event where NMITF members/officials teach members how to use a compass and a map to find various check points.

On Nov. 1, NMITF official Tyce Mister will be holding an orienteering with the federation setting up a course for teams to go and find all the check points. Participants will be given orienteering kits, which the federation recently purchased.

Other events in the remaining months of 2008 under the calendar of the federation are the DFS Halloween Run (Oct. 25), Historic Hike (Nov. 2), a mountain bike race for beginners (Nov. 8), Rota Triathlon (Nov. 16), Tough Love III (Nov. 23), Turkey Trot (Nov. 27), Hell of the Marianas (Dec. 6), and the Cross Island Relay (Dec. 27).

"For 2009, we believe we have a good line up of existing activities and races. We will focus on better marketing to bring in higher numbers of participants," Quinn said.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

LOCAL SCORES

NMIVA Standings

Acme Roofing	6	0
Enyophace	5	1
Thai One On	4	2
MHS Peers	4	2
Kimoichi	4	3
Off Twice	4	3
Karakuchi	3	2
MHS Oakies	3	4
Champ On	1	5
MHS Serves Up	0	6
MHS 67 Doh-Fins	0	6

PBA Standings

Alaska	4	0	1.000
San Miguel	3	1	0.750
Ginebra	2	1	0.667
Sta. Lucia	2	1	0.667
Talk N Text	2	2	0.500
Rain or Shine	2	2	0.500
Purefoods	1	3	0.250
Coca-Cola	1	3	0.250
Air21	1	3	0.250
Red Bull	1	3	0.250

SSC-Tsunami Dual Meet

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Tsunami Saipan swimmers and coaches pose for a group photo after the SSC-Tsunami Saipan Dual Meet Saturday at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

SSC swimmers and coaches still manage a smile after a tiring swim.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Tsunami Saipan's Kai Staal, left, adjusts his googles, while teammate Rezne Wong prepares to move up to the starting block before the 50m race starts.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

From left, Tsunami Saipan's Kai Staal and Rezne Wong, SSC's Lester Lapus, and Tsunami Saipan's Cooper Graf plunge into the pool during the 50m freestyle race.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Lisa Kimball, right, Evelyn Lapuz, center, and SSC coach Mike Villagomez check on the times of SSC swimmers.

DAN KIMBALL

SSC's Michael Moran competes in the 100m freestyle event.

DAN KIMBALL

SSC's Keanna Villagomez gets some air during the 50m butterfly event.

DAN KIMBALL

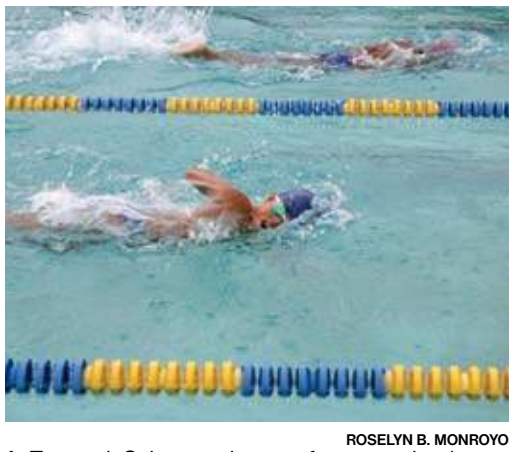
SSC's Junior Pamaran cools down after the 50m breaststroke race.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Tsunami Saipan's Kaito Yanai competes in the 100m freestyle race.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Tsunami Saipan and SSC swimmers race in the 100m freestyle event.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Tsunami Saipan swimmer, foreground, tries to catch up with a teammate in the 50m freestyle event.

DAN KIMBALL

SSC's Andrew Kimball in the 50m backstroke event.

Sakudi draws first blood in BASA women's finals

Sakudi defeated the Hitters, 13-4, in the opening game of the 2008 Belau Amateur Softball Association League women's finals last Sunday at the Dandan Ballfield.

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Patriots' Rodney Harrison's injury appears career-ending

Rodney Harrison's career is almost certainly over after the hard-hitting but injury-plagued safety of the New England Patriots tore his right thigh muscle.

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Jazy, Kimiko win pre-HOTM

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Pre-Hell of the Marianas 50K Fun Ride turned out to be a heaven for 49 riders who cruised through Saipan villages in good weather and completed the race crash and injury free.

A hustle-free race, which started from San Antonio and had participants passing through Koblerville, Airport Road, San Vicente, Papago, Laolao Bay Golf Resort, Isa Drive, Kingfisher Golf Links, Capitol Hill, Sadog Tasi, Tanapag, San Roque, and at top of the Radar Station on Chalan Matuis, helped four riders finish on top of their field.

Guam's Jazy Garcia was the first rider in the road bike category to reach the peak of the Radar Station in one hour, 44 minutes, and 47 seconds.

Guam had a 1-2 finish in the road bike division with Bobby Mandapat timing in at 1:45:02, beating

See JAZY on Page 26

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pre-Hell of Marianas 50K Fun Rider top finisher (road bike category) Jazy Garcia of Guam gets assistance from race volunteer Con Pobre Sunday at the PIC parking lot.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Kimiko Hasegawa, who later won the women's road bike 50K race, registers for the race.

Dolphins slip past Rays in MISO caging opener

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Marianas High School opened its campaign in the junior varsity division of the 2008 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization High School Basketball League with a pulsating 62-59 victory against Kagman High School yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Several errors and missed free throws from the Ayuyus in the closing seconds of the game helped the Dolphins preserve the win.

The Ayuyus threatened the Dolphins for the last time, cutting the lead to two, 59-61, after a triple from Kroy Ogo. Kagman had the chance to tie the game, but Jester Kaipat muffed his two free thows.

Juan Maratita grabbed he offensive rebound giving the Ayuyus another opportunity to force a deadlock. But he lost the ball, as he was sandwiched by the Dolphins' Brandon Aurelio and Lawrence Deleon Guerrero.

Aurelio took the spheroid and sprinted to their frontcourt, but his fastbreak

See DOLPHINS on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

MHS' Lawrence Deleon Guerrero pulls up for a shot against Kagman High School's Brandon Babauta during their game in the opening day of the MISO caging yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Acme gets back at Off Twice, keeps record clean

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Acme Roofing recovered from a slow start to beat Off Twice in one of four games last Tuesday night in the Miller Lite Four-Person Beach Volleyball League at the Pacific Islands Club sand court.

After dropping the first set, 17-21, the pacesetting Acme Roofing struggled in the last two sets before coming home with the victory, 21-18 and 21-18.

But more importantly, Acme Roofing kept an unblemished record after six games in the 11-team field tournament, while Off Twice skidded to sixth place with its 4-3 slate.

Meanwhile, Acme Roofing played against Karakuchi as of presstime last night. That game was originally scheduled on Thursday last week, Oct. 16.

Karakuchi is in seventh place with 3-4.

Acme roofing is also scheduled to play against Kimoichi in the main game at 8:30pm

See ACME on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Thai One On's Scott Eck prepares to set the ball while teammate Nick Swaim looks on during their game against MHS Serves Up in the Miller Lite Four-Person Beach Volletball League at the PIC sand courts.

NMITF out, Saipan Adventure Club in

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Northern Mariana Islands Triathlon Federation will soon rename itself to Saipan Adventure Club, according to federation president Russ Quinn.

The change aims to have an organization that promotes many fitness-based sports, not just triathlon.

Quinn

"Since we organize different sports such as, triathlons, bike races, clinics, hikes, and runs, we felt that just labeling it 'triathlon' was maybe preventing people from joining. We will still be the official triathlon federation, but our name change will hopefully encourage more members and help us have a variety of activities to promote various sports," said Quinn, who added they will use the federation's new name next year.

Despite having only three months before calling the

See NMITF on Page 26